

BEST FOR FILMS

A STAR IS BORN
Emily Wolf in Hardy's *The Woodlanders*
PAGE 34

FEB 6th 1958 WHEN TIME STOPPED FOR THE BUSBY BABES
PAGES 44, 45

PROTEST THAT COST ME A FORTUNE
PAGE 19

Imogen Stubbs on wanderlust
PLUS Orlando Figes on Solzhenitsyn
PAGES 38, 39

32 PAGES OF JOBS
Graduates... 25K
Trainees... 18K
Managers... 100K
Analysts... 55K
2 SECTIONS

Saddam 'could kill whole world'

We are ready to use force, says Blair

By Philip Webster and Michael Dynes

TONY BLAIR told Boris Yeltsin yesterday that the West must be ready to use force against President Saddam Hussein of Iraq as Britain disclosed details of Iraq's arsenal of chemical and biological weapons.

Despite an apparent warning by the Russian President that the West risked provoking another world war, the Prime Minister flew to Washington last night after telling him that if diplomatic efforts failed, "there has to be a real threat of force and the use of force if necessary."

He raised the stakes as the Foreign Office said that the Iraqi President had the capacity to produce enough nerve gas to wipe out the world's population, and in the Commons he was given all-party backing when he said that Saddam must be stopped at all costs from using his weapons of mass destruction.

"The West was not trying to prove its 'virility or machismo'," he said. "It was trying to enforce the conditions necessary for peace."

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, produced a dossier detailing Saddam's suspected weapons capability after President Yeltsin was reported as saying that President Clinton could be heading for a "third world war."

The Foreign Office said that Baghdad could produce new arsenals of chemical and biological weapons within weeks, a long-range missile in a year and a nuclear weapon in five years. In a report designed to justify fresh military action,



"It's Newsnight - can they borrow your sandpit again?"

which was sent to all MPs, it was said that Saddam, with materials acquired but not yet disclosed, could produce up to 350 litres of weapons-grade anthrax every week.

In the case of "constant harassment, concealment, harassment and obstruction", the UN monitoring effort has managed to destroy 38,000 chemical weapons, 480,000 litres of live chemical weapons agents, 48 operational missiles, six missile launchers, 30 special missile warheads for chemical and biological weapons, and hundreds of items of chemical weapons equipment.

But there are still large areas where the Iraqi authorities have failed to come clean, the report said. Although Baghdad originally claimed that its VX nerve gas project was a failure, weapons monitors found later that Iraq had the capability to produce VX on an industrial scale.

Although only four tonnes of the nerve agent appear to have been manufactured, Iraq had acquired sufficient preparatory materials to manufacture 200 tonnes, enough to kill the world's population.

Weapons monitors also discovered work on a variety of other chemical weapons, including sarin, tabun and mustard gas. At the same time, the Al Hakam biological weapons factory had produced 50,000 litres of anthrax and botulinum, which Iraq had claimed was for animal feed.

Before boarding Concorde for three days of talks with Mr. Clinton, Mr Blair called Mr Yeltsin. The Prime Minister's spokesman said that they had agreed on the seriousness of the situation and to pursue all diplomatic channels in the hope of bringing Saddam into line.

After Mr Blair had told Mr Yeltsin that force might have to be used, the Russian President "voiced his concern about that course of action", the spokesman said. "I am not going to pretend they are coming at it from exactly the same perspective."

Before leaving for a visit to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Mr Cook said: "We are trying to find a peaceful solution. But we will not let Saddam Hussein continue to obstruct the UN inspection teams. Those teams have a crucial job to do. They are our guarantee that Saddam will not amass a stockpile of weapons of mass destruction."

Cook's call, page 13
Leading article, page 21



Bill Gates, the head of Microsoft, in Brussels yesterday after becoming the latest victim of Belgium's "custard pie gang", a group of pranksters who have made a speciality of throwing pies at celebrities deemed guilty of self-importance. Mr Gates

Surprise software launch

was emerging from a car after lunch when *les entremetteurs*, who had been following him all morning, cornered him and landed at least two pies on his face and suit. Police arrested at least two people in the scuffle that followed. Responsibility for the "patisserie ambush" was claimed by Noel Godin, a Belgian who has become no-

torious for the well-organised custard pie attacks. Some of the continental media have been sniping at Mr Gates as the embodiment of voracious American businessmen and at the regal style of his latest tour to meet European leaders.

Prince to streamline charity work for sons' sake

By Nicholas Wood

THE Prince of Wales has to streamline his chief charitable interests to allow him to spend more time with his sons.

The jumbled management structure at the Prince's Trust, founded more than 20 years ago to help disadvantaged young people find work, will be replaced by a single chain of command.

But the shake-up has not been without internal tensions, with officials jockeying for position and business supporters fretting about loss of access to the Prince.

The reorganisation, expected to cut running costs by £100,000 a year, will mean that the Prince will have to liaise with just one board of trustees and chief executive.

It should also ensure that the Prince's Trust, which provides training and business start-up grants, is equipped to play a big role in the Government's New Deal programme for the unemployed. It is bidding to run an extra 8,000 training places this year.

Under the old regime, four separate groups of trustees, chairmen and chief executives working for different arms of the trust reported to the Prince, plus a co-ordinating body without full executive authority. He attended up to 30 meetings a year and spent much of his time sorting out internal disputes.

The new arrangements are intended to free him from much of the internal bureaucracy associated with the £40 million-a-year trust and give him more scope to promote its work to the world at large while reducing his overall workload.

The Prince has made no secret of his determination since the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, to spend more time with his sons.

Continued on page 2, col 3
Princess's driver, page 8

Wife defends Lottery chief

The wife of the dismissed National Lottery regulator yesterday defended her husband and condemned the Government for the way he had been treated.

Vanessa Davis said of her husband, Peter: "He has done absolutely nothing wrong. We are both absolutely devastated."

Silver hoard

Warren Buffett, the US billionaire investor, has said he has discovered a fifth of the world's annual supply of silver. Pushed roses to a nine-year high.

TV & RADIO	46-47
WEATHER	24
CROSSWORDS	28, 48
LETTERS	21
OBITUARIES	23
W. REES-MOGG	28
ARTS	34-37
CHESS & BRIDGE	45
COURT & SOCIAL	22
SPORT	41-46, 48
BODY & MIND	15
LAW REPORT	33

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Irvine calls for curbs that would suppress Cook story

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

ROBIN COOK'S affair with his mistress Gaynor Regan would not have been disclosed under new curbs on the press called for by the Lord Chancellor today.

Lord Irvine of Lairg says in an interview that he expects the Press Complaints Commission to issue tough privacy guidelines and to be able to order newspapers who ignore them to pay compensation of up to £10,000.

He also wants a mechanism for "prior restraint", so that people could go to the commission and ask it to stop stories being published that are in apparent breach of their privacy.

In an interview in the *New Statesman*, Lord Irvine is asked if he would have expected the commission to order the *News of the World* not to print the story of the Foreign Secretary and his mistress.

"I would hope that that

would be the view that the PCC would form in a case like that, yes," the Lord Chancellor replies, adding: "What public interest is there in disclosing that?"

Lord Irvine says, but he is "not aware that he has ever lectured anyone about moral values."

The Lord Chancellor says he intends to keep up pressure on the Press Complaints Commission to bring in its new sanctions to accompany the Human Rights Bill, which will allow judges to invoke a right to privacy in making decisions in the courts.

He expects most disputes over privacy to be dealt with by the commission rather than by the courts, although others have said people would prefer to use the courts.

The courts, Lord Irvine says, might not take the same line as the commission. He expresses doubts over whether

British firm kicks off for Germany

By Jason Nisse

SAATCHI & SAATCHI, the advertising agency that promotes the National Lottery and British Airways, is to be appointed co-ordinator for the German bid to host the 2006 World Cup.

The London firm has been put on a "shortlist of one" for the job, with a formal appointment due in the next few days. A team from Saatchi in Frankfurt is expected to be bolstered by Alex Flynn, the agency's football expert, who was closely involved in the formation of the English Premiership.

The German bid is in direct opposition to one from the English Football Association and the battle is set to be as fiercely contested as the 1990 World Cup semi-final in Turin and the Euro 96 semi-final at Wembley.

Yesterday the battle exploded into a war of words when Franz Beckenbauer, the former captain of the German team who is leading his na-

tion's bid, called for Uefa, the European governing body, to "have the guts" to make England withdraw. "It is crazy for the English to keep on with their bid, but their campaigning is very aggressive."

The English side rejected the call and accused Herr Beckenbauer of running scared. Alex McGivan, the Football Association's campaign director, said: "Why is Franz Beckenbauer so worried? Has it got something to do with the strength of England's bid?"

Uefa said it would not get involved in the battle between the two associations.

Saatchi will be in charge of marketing and lobbying for the German bid. The initial contract is expected to be worth less than £1 million, but Saatchi would then hope to pick up the advertising for the competition if Germany wins, a deal worth tens of millions.

Thief bitten by police dog is awarded £900

By Paul Wilkinson

A THIEF with more than 50 convictions has been awarded £900 damages for being bitten by a police dog while being arrested. Mark Coles, 23, who has served three prison sentences, brought his claim at Sheffield County Court with the benefit of legal aid.

The award against South Yorkshire Police, which was also ordered to pay costs approaching £5,000, provoked an outcry. Ian Westwood, the vice-chairman of the Police Federation of England and

Wales, said: "We hope South Yorkshire Police will appeal this decision. It could open the floodgates to other claimants and bring into question the use of police dogs to subdue violent suspects."

Mr Coles, 6ft and 16 stone, said he was traumatised by his injuries after being bitten twice during his arrest in June 1992. He is now fearful of any dog he meets in the street and cowers behind his wife. He also said that the bites left him rolling on the ground screaming. He needed hospital attention and walked with

crutches for two months. He was attacked by Max in June 1992 after police had seen him riding pillion on a suspected stolen motorcycle. Mr Coles and two witnesses claimed the police twice set the dog on him to force him to tell them where the motorcycle was hidden.

But officers told the court that the dog was used only to subdue him when he was struggling violently as he was being arrested by PC Sharon Hancock, who described Mr Coles as "a regular crookster".

Judge Patrick Barfield

awarded Mr Coles £2,250 but reduced the amount to £900 because he believed Mr Coles was 60 per cent responsible. The judge said the use of the alsatian was an over-reaction. Mr Coles, unemployed, from Barnsley, South Yorkshire, said: "I am giving the money to charity and I am going straight. This dog had a reputation amongst my friends and was known as Mad Max because of its aggressive behaviour."

The dog retired to become a domestic pet and died recently.



Coles was a "regular customer of the police"

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WULD YOU GET TEN SOLDIERS CROSS FRICA, NOT JUST TEN CROSS?

Will someone tell Blair he is in charge

FOR people who think Parliament matters, Wednesday was a depressing day. Upstairs in committee, supporters as well as opponents of fox-hunting watched, dismayed, as MPs threw up their hands in surrender and admitted that, after six weeks of debate, they had failed to assemble a Bill that was even capable of debate, let alone enactment.

Downstairs in the Chamber, Tony Blair delayed his departure to Washington long enough to look in at Westminster and treat his party in the Commons like some sort of clique. In America they have drum major-ettes. In Britain we have new Labour backbenchers. Panting poodles sat up and

begged: each was awarded with his or her biscuit. The Prime Minister escaped serious questioning even from the Leader of the Opposition, William Hague, perhaps stung by accusations that his pursuit of Robin Cook's private arrangements sounded undignified last week, opted now to play the statesman instead. He offered Mr Blair Tory support in standing up to Saddam Hussein.

Those of us who, last week, deplored Hague the scandal-monger were forced to admit yesterday that there are also problems with the alternative. It's hard to be gritty and Churchillian when you're only 36 and not in charge, and one was reminded of



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Harold Wilson's mission to sort out the Vietnam crisis in 1965. Still, Hague sounded composed — if not stately. He came back later with a plea for farmers, which will have pleased farmers.

Oddly enough, Tony Blair's performance as world statesman also needs more work. His problem is the opposite of Hague's. Blair is in charge — but cannot help slipping into the role of playground nose-thumper. Though Prime Minister for some time now, his attacks on the Conservative Govern-

ment continue unabated. It is as though, uncertain what else he can say which will be greeted with any warmth by those behind him, he yells yah-hoo-sucks at Tories and Iraqis, confident that that at least will please.

Yesterday the Prime Minister called Saddam a liar — twice. He called the Tories hypocrites and opportunists once, "appalling" hypocrites and opportunists once, and "opportunists, with not a single constructive thing to say" once. That's why they're in opposition and we're in government!" he screamed. "What's eating the guy? You don't have to say this kind of thing when you're Prime Minister. People know you're boss. But Blair sat behind his dispatch box while Hague was complaining about farm incomes yesterday, with his jaw working, his eyebrows jutting skywards and the expression of a chap fighting the temptation to flick blotting-paper pellets at the Opposition Leader.

Both men were spared the Commons scenes during the stupid debate that morning on Robin Cook's diary secretary. A deputy Speaker, Michael Martin, appeared helpless — or supine — as government backbenchers

mounted one of the ugliest displays of Commons bar-racking observers had seen in years.

A badly advised Oliver Letwin (C, Dorset W), who should never have been talked into leading this rough-house stuff, was jeered into inaudibility by Labour MPs, hard mouths contorted by loathing. They worked themselves up into something less like a party than a mob. It was an unnerving reminder of a bullying faction of Labour I had begun to forget: intolerant, group-conformist and hateful.

Mr Letwin, a thoughtful-sounding, rather cerebral man, looked shaken. But he achieved, from an ill-judged start, a kind of moral victory.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dunwoody in call to free Winnie the Pooh

The Labour MP Gwyneth Dunwoody is demanding the liberation and repatriation of Winnie the Pooh and his friends, which she says are being held against their will in New York Central Library. Mrs Dunwoody, MP for Crew and Nantwich, recently visited the bear, Piglet, Tigger, Eeyore, Kanga and Roo — the originals given as toys by the author A.A. Milne to his son Christopher Robin — and she has now tabled a Commons question to Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, asking what plans he has to bring them home. They are the British equivalent of the Elgin Marbles, she said. *Leading article, page 21*

Doubts over police chief

The Chief Constable of Grampian police yesterday asked the chairman of his police authority for 24-hours to consider his position after allegations that he conducted an affair with a married woman while on duty. Ian Oliver, 58, was pictured in a national newspaper embracing Sonya Courtiner, 24, a mother of two.

Students protest at fees

Students have voted for a one-day walkout next month in protest at the introduction of £1,000 tuition fees in the autumn. The National Union of Students said 130 student unions had agreed to join the action on March 4. Douglas Trainer, Labour president of the NUS, said: "Students and their parents cannot afford to pay any more."

Father slashes children

A man cut his children's throats before killing himself with a six-inch knife. Paramedics saved Matthew McKay, 6, and his sister Jamie, 4, from bleeding to death after police forced their way into a flat in Fleetwood, Lancashire. Kenneth McKay's body was found inside. Both children were in "a poor condition" in hospital last night.

Shortage of engineers

Land Rover will look abroad for engineers for the first time after a recruitment campaign in Britain failed to find enough. When the company advertised for 150 engineers for its plant at Solihull in the West Midlands, only 20 people applied for the £30,000 posts. By contrast, 3,000 applications were received for 250 production-line jobs.

Strang keeps to the left

Gavin Strang has dismissed the possibility of Britain ever switching to driving on the right. The Transport Minister reminded the European Parliament's transport committee of Sweden's switch 30 years ago after a referendum. "I'm not sure it was practical for the UK to do it then," he said. "That was the last chance. It would be unthinkable now."

Education role for Rattle

The conductor Sir Simon Rattle, right, who has attacked education policy on the arts, is to join a government committee to improve creativity in schools. The poet Benjamin Zephaniah will also sit on the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, set up by David Blunkett, the Education Secretary. The committee will consider how to develop children's lateral thinking.



Churchill's £1,000 cigar

One of Winston Churchill's famous Havana cigars fetched £1,050 at auction. The boxed, hand-rolled cigar came complete with two letters signed by Churchill's wife, Clementine, and was bought by an anonymous Australian. The 5in cigar was sold by the Sue Ryder Foundation, which was given it anonymously 18 months ago.

Wilde in class of his own



An unpublished photograph of Oscar Wilde as a schoolboy is expected to fetch up to £900 at a Bonhams auction in London on February 24. The boys of Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, are pictured in about 1870 when Wilde, at 6ft 3in prominent at the centre of the second row, was 15 or 16. The photograph came from a private source in Devon. *Letters, page 21*

Anti-hunt supporters told Bill is flawed

By James Landale, Political Reporter

ANTI-HUNT campaigners were dealt a blow yesterday when the Government admitted that the backbench Bill designed to ban the sport was "flawed and unworkable".

George Howarth, a Home Office Minister, said that the Wild Mammals (Hunting with Dogs) Bill was defective and insisted the Government had a duty to intervene to ensure that "unworkable law does not end up on the statute book". MPs abruptly halted the detailed committee stage consideration of the measure while Home Office officials began drafting new amendments to be put before MPs next week.

Ministers are concerned that the Bill could make innocent pet-owners guilty of a crime if their dog chases a rabbit while being taken for a walk. Mr Howarth believes the Bill as presently drafted does not make it clear enough that only people who deliberately allow dogs to hunt animals will be prosecuted. He also has concerns with other parts of the Bill, which has been criticised for being poorly drafted.

The Bill, sponsored by Michael Foster, Labour MP for Worcester, would ban the hunting of foxes, hares, mink and deer with hounds. MPs gave the measure their overwhelming support in November when it received its second reading by 411 votes to 151.

Some anti-hunt MPs on the committee welcomed the Government's intervention as a

sign that ministers were finally coming off the fence to back the measure. Four Labour committee members said in a statement that they were now confident that the Bill would reach the statute book. "The assistance is clearly the action of a Government which wants the Bill to be in good order before it completes its passage through the House of Commons," they said.

But Mr Howarth insisted that the Government had not reversed its policy of strict neutrality towards the Bill and simply had a duty to improve unworkable legislation. Officials made clear that ministers would maintain their refusal to give the Bill government time. No private members' Bill has ever reached the statute book without government time and the hunting Bill is expected to run into the sand next month during its report stage on the floor of the Commons.

Opponents of the Bill criticised the Home Office for failing to act earlier on an issue which has been widely discussed by the committee. Officials insisted that the Government intervention was necessary only because the MPs themselves had failed to make the Bill workable despite hours of debate.

Tony Baldry, Tory MP for Banbury, who raised the issue with the Speaker in the Commons, said there had been a "bizarre cockup" which had rendered the previous weeks of debate irrelevant.



Tom Shebbeare, who co-wrote a book with the young Peter Mandelson

Prince's charity reform

Continued from page 1
Princess of Wales, to devote more time to Prince William, 15, and Prince Harry, 13.

Details of the changes were disclosed to *The Times* yesterday as senior staff at the Prince's Trust, based at Regent's Park in London, were informed.

They were drawn up by a taskforce chaired by Lord Sheppard of Didgmore, former chairman of the leisure group Grand Metropolitan, which has been in operation since December.

Tom Shebbeare, a close associate of the Prince for many years, has emerged the victor from a behind-the-

scenes power struggle at the trust headquarters. He will become chief executive of a reconstituted and more powerful Prince's Trust.

Its newly formed eight-strong council, chaired by Lord Sheppard, will control four other bodies.

Sources have told *The Times* that they doubt whether the shake-up goes far enough, because many of the old guard will survive. There have also been murmurs from some businessmen that the Prince's Trust risks breaching political boundaries and becoming too closely involved with new Labour.

But these criticisms were

rejected yesterday by Mr Shebbeare. He said it was "cock-eyed" to claim that the Prince's Trust had merged with new Labour.

The new Prince's Trust council will comprise Lord Sheppard, Sir Christopher Harding, also chairman of the Prince's Youth Business Trust, John Jarvis, chairman of the Prince's Trust — Action, Mr Lamport, Peter Mimprius, a lawyer specialising in charity law, Sir Angus Ogilvy, husband of Princess Alexandra, Kate Thomas, chairman of the trust's Welsh operation, and Mike Woodhouse, chairman of the Prince's Trust volunteers.

Prince's aide is close to Labour

By Nicholas Wood

LIKE many of those getting to the top today, Tom Shebbeare's links with new Labour go back a long way.

Mr Shebbeare, 46, a Labour activist in his days reading politics at Exeter University, was secretary of the British Youth Council from 1973-80 — about the time Peter Mandelson was the chairman. He joined forces with Mr Mandelson, now Minister without Portfolio, to write a book on tackling youth unemployment.

Their efforts did not go unnoticed by the then Labour

MAN IN THE NEWS

Government. "Peter and I met Jim Callaghan around the Cabinet table and said what should be done." Their ideas were reflected in the Youth Opportunities Programme launched shortly afterwards.

Mr Shebbeare spent most of the 1980s in Strasbourg working for the Council of Europe and the European Youth Foundation. He returned to Britain in 1987 to be appointed by the Prince of Wales as the first full-time director of a then much smaller Prince's Trust.

He strikes an unconventional pose among the pin-striped suits surrounding the Prince at his offices in St James's Palace. Favouring a battered old coat, he travels by bicycle.

Mr Shebbeare has secured his position as the Prince of Wales's right-hand man in helping young people from severely disadvantaged backgrounds find training, business start-up grants and a job.

He is married to a teacher, has two children, and lives near Abingdon in Oxfordshire.

Churchmen urge Human Rights Bill rethink

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

CHURCH leaders have expressed concern over human rights legislation which they fear will put them under the jurisdiction of the secular courts.

Senior churchmen and women today launch a protest against the Human Rights Bill, which is to have its third reading in the House of Lords today.

The Bill requires that "public authorities" comply with the Euro-

pean Convention on Human Rights, and churches and other religious bodies will have to comply because they count as public bodies.

In a letter to *The Times*, leading members of the General Synod of the Church of England say that the Bill will for the first time give secular courts a role in judging moral, spiritual and doctrinal matters. Their concerns are supported by at least 50 other synod members.

They cite the example of a church school headmaster who commits adultery, leaves his wife and cohabits

with a colleague. Under the legislation, they say, he could put the school in the dock if moves were made to dismiss him.

The protesters say that the legislation could be used to force the Church to consecrate women bishops and to ordain practising homosexuals, and to marry homosexuals if state law were to change.

Also, churches and charities could be vulnerable to legal challenge over their rules about employing only those who accept their beliefs. One example would be a shopping centre

owned by the Church Commissioners, who manage the Church's assets. A newsagent who breached the terms of the lease by selling pornography could appeal against an eviction order under Article 9 of the European Convention, citing his right to freedom of conscience and belief.

Philip Gore, a leading evangelical on the General Synod, said: "If this goes through, churches will be fighting dozens of cases in the courts. Only the lawyers will benefit."

The Maranatha community, a 10,000-strong movement of Chris-

tians from all denominations, said Britons would be deprived of "fundamental religious liberties". "It is already known that a number of militant groups are planning to use this legislation, if enacted, to take churches to court which could involve enormous litigation costs," the community said.

Baroness Young will today move an amendment giving religious bodies a legal defence when faced with litigation.

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Pilot expelled from club for 'racist' remark

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

A BRITISH Airways pilot expelled from an exclusive golf club after he shouted "Cut the cheating Irish bastard" during a prize-giving ceremony launched a High Court action yesterday to secure his reinstatement.

Explaining that it was "the sort of thing that goes on in the members' bar", Christopher Lankey told Mr Justice Buckley that he did not regard the comment, at an evening presentation attended by some of the 700 members' families, as abusive or racist.

Mr Lankey said the remark was intended as a compliment to the handicap held by his friend, Shane Roche, with whom he played almost every day. The court was told that Mr Lankey would be seeking a declaration that the expulsion was null and void and damages for the loss of the pleasure of membership.

Mr Lankey, who had been a full member of the club since 1982, claims that Ealing Golf Club (1923) Ltd was in breach of its contract by not allowing him to use the club facilities, and had not treated him fairly. Ken Munro, his counsel, said: "He wants to be able to play golf at the club with the 100 or so people who have signed a petition that he should stay."

Richard Spearman, QC, for the club, asked if Mr Lankey, from Bayswater, West London, would regard "cheating Irish bastard" or "cutting the cheating Irish bastard" as racist.

"No," Mr Lankey replied, "not if it was someone I knew very well and we had that sort of rapport between us. I appreciate political correctness in the world these days but racism was certainly not intended."

He said he assumed there were people of Irish extraction at the event in August 1995. "I would always assume that — there's some lovely Irish people at the club. But what I said was never intended to offend anyone."

He had consumed five pints of beer at most, and confessed he had been a "little bit noisy". But he added: "I don't consider that's an amount of drink which makes me fall down."

After one letter of complaint and a disciplinary meeting with club officials he had provided a handwritten apology that was posted on a noticeboard. Thinking that the matter was settled, Mr Lankey said he was shocked to receive a letter of expulsion. The club,



Lankey shouted "cut the cheating Irish bastard"

based at Greenford, West London, says that the expulsion was inevitable given a long history of complaints about Mr Lankey, and a number of warnings. It says that the manner in which he was expelled did not breach any of the club rules and that it had been fully entitled to expel him.

Mr Lankey told Mr Spearman that he regarded the club's stance as "ridiculous" but agreed that he had received a warning in March 1984, suspending him for two months, after a complaint about abusive behaviour.

He denied, however, knowing anything of a complaint in 1982 about "ungentlemanly behaviour" to some visiting lady golfers. People who said that it had happened were "abject liars", he said.

He had also been given a warning, in March 1991, that members were entitled to have a quiet drink without listening to him "shouting and swearing and abusing anyone within earshot".

There was also a reference to a head-butting incident that month between Mr Lankey and another member. Mr Lankey, who is 6ft, said a member, than him had "smashed" into him and stunned him for an instant. He said: "A friend saw it and thought it was completely deliberate. I was always willing to give him the benefit of the doubt that he had fallen into me. My instant reaction was to try and get up and push him away."

The hearing was adjourned until today.



Jermyn St unfazed by £9 shirt tale

Philip Delves Broughton tries on the Tesco garment that collared a *Which?* accolade

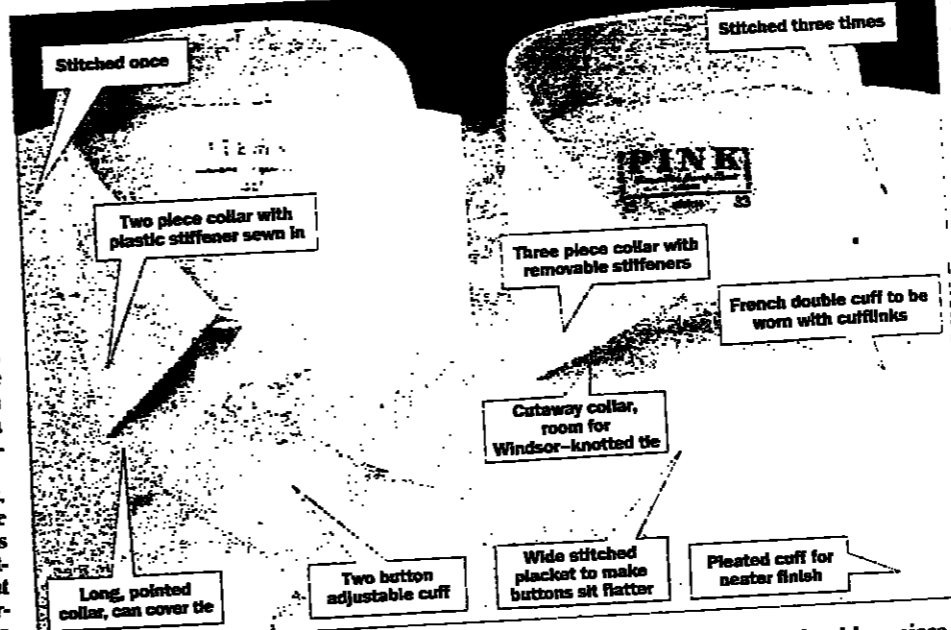
MEN would do better to put their shirt on a supermarket product than go to Jermyn Street, the home of British shirtmaking, if they want value for money, according to a consumer magazine survey. *Which?* tested 77 white shirts and concluded that a Tesco shirt costing £9 was better than more exalted rivals.

Using a points system to grade the shirts for style, durability over 25 washes and ironability, *Which?* gave the Tesco Items poly-cotton shirt eight out of ten and a £50 Thomas Pink pure cotton number only six.

At Turnbull and Asser, bespoke shirtmakers to the Prince of Wales and James Bond, Paul Cuss, chief shirtmaker, is phlegmatic about any war with the supermarket. "You could argue that a Ford is better value than a Rolls Royce," he said, "but some people will always want the Rolls."

At Tesco's Brent Cross branch, on London's North Circular Road, I found the £9 shirt. Back in my car, I removed my own shirt — blue, Italian, cotton, with a slightly frayed collar, — and put it on.

On the back of the packet, the makers picked out several key features: two-piece collar, two-button adjustable cuff, classic curved hem.



They neglected to mention that the shirt was also enormous. It was supposed to be my size, but was billowing round my stomach like one of Dr Johnson's nightgowns. Once I had it tucked in almost down to my knees, it began to itch. But for £9, it did the basics of looking fine and covering my nakedness.

It needed the eye of an expert. So, to Jermyn Street, Thomas Pink, founded in 1883, is a relative newcomer, but now has the biggest shirt

shop there and dominates the market in ready-made City shirts. It has just opened a shop on Madison Avenue. Their basic white cotton shirt costs £52.50.

Carol Anand, a manager in the store, was reluctant to criticise the Tesco rival, but pointed out how the Pink shirt differed. Pink's had a three-piece collar, top-side, underside and lining. "It means it does not go bobby after washing," said Miss Anand. A split-yoke divided

the shirt's shoulder piece, making it sit better on the shoulders. Everywhere, the seams were thicker, the stitching more precise. The double cuff had two sets of holes, so that it could be adjusted for those with different arm lengths. Down at the gusset was a small pink triangle of cloth for added strength. All in all, an impressive shirt.

What the *Which?* survey failed to include in its test was the pleasure rating of

buying a shirt. For many men, shirt-shopping is one of few sorts of shopping they enjoy. Among the wood panels and hunting prints at Thomas Pink, there are shirts, back-lit, in glass cases and a spacious dressing room, not to mention a whole array of shirt accessories, ties, cufflinks, collar stiffeners. Had *Which?* been rating them for these, Pink would have left Tesco far behind.

At Turnbull and Asser, Mr Cuss explained why Ronald Reagan, Al Pacino, Paul Allen, the co-founder of Microsoft, and Sean Connery buy their shirts made-to-measure from him: "First we take Egyptian or Saudi Arabian long-staple yarn, have it double twisted for softness and dyed according to our own patterns — this is before all the cutting by hand and fitting."

Unsurprisingly, a Turnbull and Asser bespoke shirt starts at £100. "The people who come in here probably have a chauffeur waiting outside," said Mr Cuss.

After a quick perusal of the Tesco shirt, he gave his own score: "Hundred out of hundred for what it is. But then, you do get what you pay for." In other words, Tesco can take its shirt and stuff it.

Rugby stars blamed for nightclub fight

BY A STAFF REPORTER

LEADING rugby players caused mayhem when they scrummed down on a nightclub dance floor and scattered other people enjoying a night out, a court was told yesterday.

The behaviour of 20 players — including the All Blacks star Frano Botica and Welsh international Robin McBryde — allegedly so alarmed Dave Whetton, manager of the Quids Inn Club in Swansea, that he sent out an SOS for off-duty bouncers.

Shortly after they arrived hooker McBryde, once dubbed the strongest man in

Wales, was knocked out by a single punch. That was the trigger for a fight involving up to 30 people in which Botica was hit in the face and rushed outside to call for help.

McBryde, the Llanelli captain, was carried out and his friend David King punched in the head before the fracas spilt outside where another member of the party, Mark Rees, was hit on the head with a beer crate.

Michael Winter, 40, from Swansea, one of the off-duty doormen to receive a call for help, denies wounding with intent and violent disorder.

The prosecution at Swansea Crown Court alleges that he over-reacted and struck Mr Rees with a Holsten lager crate, leaving him with a head wound that required 35 stitches.

David Whetton, the nightclub manager, said that members of the Llanelli rugby team had been drinking heavily all day and refused to calm down when asked to. "They locked arms in a scrum and went backwards and forwards over the dancefloor. I thought it was too dangerous. Then the rumpus broke out."

The trial continues.

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Lottery chief's wife stands by her man

Joanna Bale and Andrew Pierce on barefoot tribute to sacked regulator

VANESSA DAVIS was watching the disaster film *Titanic* while her husband's career as National Lottery regulator, unbeknown to her, was sinking fast. Yesterday she described him as a talented, loyal businessman who did not deserve the public humiliation of being forced to resign.

Mrs Davis stood barefoot in her dressing gown on the doorstep of her Wimbledon home to pay tribute to her husband Peter, who stayed out of sight. Mrs Davis, who is recovering from flu, said: "I love him very much and he's a loyal, wonderful businessman." Asked how he was coping with the strain, she replied: "He's robust, stalwart, fine."



Peter Davis arriving at his office yesterday; his wife said he did not deserve the public humiliation

The ousted Director-General of Oflot, who was given £42,000 payoff in lieu of notice, had no immediate plans to take up a new job. "It's very early days yet," she said.

On Tuesday, as the Director-General was given his marching orders, she had been at the cinema with her mobile phone off. Mr Davis, who had insisted that he, not the media, would tell her of his sacking, waited for three hours outside the office of Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, for her to return home.

When the call came through from her husband, she told friends: "He has done abso-

lutely nothing wrong. We are both absolutely devastated." She also condemned the Government for the way he had been treated: "Chris Smith has been terrific but I can't say the same for the others."

Earlier, when Mr Davis arrived for the fateful meeting, he had cheerily declared it would last only minutes. He had told his office that he would still be in a job by 6pm.

It was a serious miscalculation. Throughout the morning he had appeared safe. But by lunchtime the Prime Minister and the Labour whips, who reported that backbenchers were demanding a scalp, insisted that Mr Davis had to go. Mr Smith duly obliged

and the deed was done in 90 minutes behind closed doors at the Culture Department at Trafalgar Square.

It emerged last night that Mr Davis had come within hours of being sacked in December 1995 after it became known he had accepted flights and hospitality from GTEch, Virginia Bottomley, then Heritage Secretary, was urged by advisers to dismiss him. After consulting Michael Heseltine and other senior colleagues, Mrs Bottomley gave him a second chance.

Mrs Davis has always fiercely defended her husband over criticism of his close links with GTEch, which owns 22.5 per cent of Camelot. It was her

long-standing friendship with the wife of Carl Menges, a director of GTEch, which resulted in the two men becoming friends.

She had known Cordelia Menges since 1975 when the two women attended antenatal classes together. Mr and Mrs Davis were criticised for enjoying lavish hospitality from the Mengeses.

Mrs Davis has spent her married life at home, raising her two sons, Timothy, 20, and Alexander, 22, who is studying modern languages at his father's alma mater, Lincoln College, Oxford.

Mr Davis's successor will have one over-riding aim, to restore public confidence in the lottery, it emerged yesterday, as the Government took steps to advertise the £89,000-a-year post.

The new lottery regulator will have the power to fine Camelot — as laid out in draft lottery legislation currently proceeding through Parliament — and will have the benefit of an advisory panel to assist in the choice of lottery operator. Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, told MPs the appointment of a new director-general would "provide the opportunity for a fresh start and will ensure that the lottery continues to be respected and successful".

The Government is likely to advertise the post and to draw



John Stoker, the acting Director-General, outside Oflot's offices yesterday. He will meet Camelot directors over Mr Snowden's links with the lottery

on the services of headhunters, who said the package on offer was unlikely to appeal to high-flying captains of industry. In many ways, the ideal candidate would be "a nice, middle-aged, boring chartered accountant" — almost precisely the terms in which Mr Davis described himself when he took up the post in October 1993.

GTEch man is facing demand to sell shares

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN STOKER, the lottery's acting Director-General, is today expected to demand that the man at the centre of the bribe scandal should sell his remaining shares in GTEch.

Mr Stoker is due to meet Camelot directors this morning to spell out his concerns about any links that Guy Snowden still has with the National Lottery.

The move follows yesterday's Commons statement by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, who said that Mr Stoker's first priority would be to ensure that Mr Snowden could no longer gain "any direct financial benefit" from the lottery.

Mr Snowden resigned as a director of Camelot within minutes of the court verdict upholding claims that he had tried to bribe Richard Branson into stepping down from the race to win the lottery licence. Mr Snowden also resigned from the board of GTEch UK, part of the Camelot Consortium. On Tuesday night he quit as chairman of GTEch Corporation, after the resignation of Peter Davis, the lottery Director-General. Ministers are

Tory peer stands by his 'close friend' Snowden

BY ANDREW PIERCE

THE Tory peer who devised the strategy to wreck Richard Branson's bid to run the National Lottery last night defended Guy Snowden, the GTEch chairman, who resigned after the High Court verdict he had offered a bribe to Branson.

Lord Moyrhan, whose company CMA Consultants has been paid £5,000 a month by GTEch since December 1993, has stayed at Mr Snowden's Florida home. "He is a close family friend. We have gone fishing together," Lord Moyrhan said. "I like him very much. I still do."

The former Tory Sports Minister, whose links with GTEch were criticised by Labour MPs in the Commons yesterday, will today write to Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary.

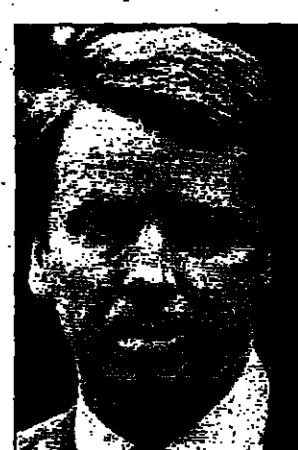
"We have nothing to hide. I will show him any papers or any aspects of our work with GTEch," Lord Moyrhan said. "We acted as professional advisers with maximum probity at all times."

It emerged last night that a second leading Tory is closely associated with GTEch. Lord Moore of Lower Marsh, who was a Cabinet minister under Baroness Thatcher, has been a director of GTEch Corporation in the United States since 1992. He is paid £20,000 a year plus \$1,000 (£620) a day for attending meetings and a further \$1,000 for any day in which he spends more than five hours on company business.

Lord Moyrhan's consultancy won the contract from Mr Snowden because of its work with the brewery Bass, which had considered making a bid to run the lottery.

"I never used my contacts in the Tory party to help. I never lobbied or spoke to any minister or the Director-General [of the lottery] about the GTEch consortium," he said.

He said GTEch deserved to win. "Richard Branson did not have the experience."



Moyrhan: stayed Snowden's US home

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Buy-out would devastate system

BY IAN ASHWORTH AND OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

GTECH could be bought out by the four other Camelot shareholders and replaced by a rival technical operator — but not without massive disruption to the National Lottery, it was claimed yesterday.

Cadbury Schweppes, Racal Electronics, De La Rue and ICL would find it almost impossible to put a valuation on GTEch's 22.5 per cent shareholding. Camelot's licence expires in September 2001 and the stake is worth progressively less over time.

The five consortium members invested £50 million in the National Lottery start-up on top of £10 million in pre-bid costs. Camelot's shareholders have received dividends to date of £53.4 million, of which £12 million has gone to GTEch. It has earned a further £66.2 million from supply contracts with Camelot, although how much of that is profit is not disclosed.

It is theoretically possible for Camelot to buy GTEch out of its shareholding, while retaining it as a supplier of services. A further possibility would be for Camelot to replace GTEch altogether but not without widespread disruption.

Shutting down the National Lottery during the handover — potentially for some weeks — would make it unlikely that ticket sales would recover to their former levels. That would threaten the Government's goal of raising £9 billion for good causes over the seven-year term of the licence.

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Judge warns press as he fines pop star over affray

THE JUDGE criticised the behaviour of press photographers as he fined a pop star £1,000 after he was found guilty of affray over an attack on one of them.

Judge Jeffrey Rucker condemned photographers who had been waiting for Brian Harvey, the former lead singer of East 17, to emerge from Stringfellows nightclub in London. Before the incident Harvey had caused outrage by claiming that Ecstasy was a safe drug; he was then thrown out of the group.

Judge Rucker said: "It does not justify assault but the time must come when Parliament is constrained to control this kind of journalism." He also criticised *The Mirror*, which paid more than £30,000 for photographs of the affray, for describing it as a vicious street brawl when it was not.

After the case Harvey, 23, from Loughton, Essex, who was cleared of causing actual bodily harm, maintained his innocence and claimed that he



had walked into a trap set by the photographers.

Martin Hicks, for the prosecution, told Southwark Crown Court that after being asked to leave the nightclub Harvey hit Reinaldo Vargas, 44, who was waiting outside, several times in the face. Harvey and others, he said, then followed him and the pop star kicked him as he was lying on the floor. Simon

Reinol, for Harvey, said that Mr Vargas' partner, John Bushell, stood back and took photographs. "If a man was prepared to stand back and take photos while a mate was really taking a beating, his scruples you may think sink so low it would need Jacques Cousteau to find them," he said.

The judge said Harvey, who had admitted being drunk, had earlier granted a photo opportunity to Mr Vargas outside another nightclub. "But they were not happy with that. I have learnt they seldom are." Paparazzi, he said, could be asked nicely or nastily or with good reason not to take photographs but they still did. "I take the view that such persecution is thoroughly provocative," he said.

Mr Vargas, he added, had suffered only a grazed nose but was pictured in *The Mirror* in bed wearing a neck brace and with his arm in a sling. "That photograph was a lie and people who had anything to do with it should be ashamed of themselves."



Kerry Moorcroft at court yesterday. She said she was happy with the sentence

Drink driving ruins career of police woman

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A POLICEWOMAN caught driving the wrong way on a one-way street while two-and-a-half times over the drink-drive limit escaped a jail sentence yesterday.

Kerry Moorcroft's solicitor said that, as a police officer, she would be in "grave danger" if imprisoned.

Instead Moorcroft, 23, was put on probation for 18 months, ordered to do 80 hours community service, disqualified from driving for two years and ordered to pay £40 prosecution costs.

Magistrates were told that Moorcroft, a single parent with a 2½-year-old child, faces dismissal and had ruined a potentially brilliant police career. Steve Smith, her solicitor, said that she had begun a law degree at Birmingham University before joining South Yorkshire police two years ago and "had the world at her feet".

"For one moment's thoughtlessness she put paid to what was to be a long and illustrious career," Mr Smith told magistrates at Rotherham, south Yorkshire. He blamed the drink-driving on "a dreadful year" in Moorcroft's personal life, including a road accident in which she and her child were seriously injured.

David Tiptaft, chairman of the magistrates, told her that a jail sentence had been considered but probation and community service was thought more appropriate. Moorcroft from Rawmarsh, Rotherham, had 118 micrograms of alcohol in 100ml of breath when stopped in December. The limit is 35 micrograms.

Afterwards she said: "I am happy with the outcome of the case. At least I have kept my freedom."

A hospital consultant whose car was stopped by worried motorists as she drove erratically while three times over the drink-drive limit was given a suspended jail sentence yesterday.

Sarah Scott-Barrett, 37, who pleaded guilty, was given a nine-week sentence suspended for two years by Norwich magistrates. Scott-Barrett, from Loddon, Norfolk, was also fined £2,000 and banned from driving for three years.

Impatient for a son and heir? Well, just keep your hat on

A MAN who keeps his hat on in bed, and whistles during sex, may not be quite as casual as he seems. He may want to have a son.

A collection of traditional Irish health superstitions brought together for the first time for a book on women's health shows that whistling and wearing a peaked cap were strongly recommended to men pining for a son at the turn of this century on the Great Blasket Island, off Kerry. As an extra refinement, the cap had to be worn backwards, rather in the style of today's baseball caps.

Superstitions surrounding pregnancy and childbirth on the Blaskets have been collected by Padraig O'Heala, lecturer in Irish at National

Audrey Magee on Irish folklore that helped an English scholar

University of Ireland, Galway, and published in the university's *Women's Studies Review*. Dr O'Heala said that the customs became necessary to relieve tensions about childbirth and pregnancy, as the island's population was only 180 and there was high infant mortality and maternal death in childbirth.

"Traditional practices afforded an opportunity to exercise a measure of control and were undoubtedly of great psychological assistance," the study says. The advice was even shared with visiting Englishmen, Robin Flower, from the British Museum, who went to the island in 1910 to learn Gaelic.

Originally from Leeds, he was popular among the locals who called him *Blaithin* or "the flower". He returned to the island the following year on his honeymoon and every summer until the First World War. He had three daughters and, wanting a son, he consulted the local midwife, Meini.

She left an account of what happened: "Blaithin, says I, 'the next time you are about your business with your wife, whistle and you will have a son.' Afterwards he let me know he did as I had told him. When his holidays were over, he left the island and after nine months he wrote saying, 'A son has been born to us and we called him Patrick.'"

Despite widespread poverty, children were highly prized on the island. It was said that a pregnant woman was in a sacred state. Fires were lit in the house during confinement to ward off evil and remained alight until the child was baptised. Islanders spat on newborn infants to make them less appealing to dark forces.

Great Blasket has been deserted since 1953, when the last 22 residents were moved to the mainland.

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Government 'has no plutonium strategy'

Scientists want action to prevent terrorists making bombs from the stockpile, Nigel Hawkes reports



Mason: chaired Royal Society committee

BRITAIN has no strategy for dealing with the 54 tons of plutonium in storage at Sellafield in Cumbria, a committee of scientists said yesterday.

The plutonium, sufficient to make hundreds of bombs, has been produced as a by-product of Britain's nuclear reactor programme. By 2010 the stockpile will have doubled, says a report issued by a Royal Society committee chaired by Sir Ron Mason, a former Chief Scientific Adviser at the Ministry of Defence.

The committee warns that plutonium is highly toxic and could potentially be used for making atomic bombs if it fell into the wrong hands. For both these reasons it concludes that Britain should have a considered policy for dealing with it - either by burning it as a fuel in nuclear plants, burying it in a deep

depository as waste, or producing less of it by not reprocessing spent nuclear fuel.

The lack of such a policy is disturbing, the committee says. The risk that access to the plutonium might at some stage be gained for illicit weapons production "is of extreme concern".

Plutonium is produced inside nuclear reactors and separated out by reprocessing the spent fuel. Weapons-grade plutonium contains 93 per cent of the fissile isotope plutonium-239 but most of that stored by Britain is of a much lower grade. The longer a reactor is kept running, the greater the burn-up of the fuel and the lower the proportion of plutonium-239.

That makes it much less suitable for bombs. The report suggests that the critical mass of reactor-grade plutonium is

ten times that of weapons-grade and that weapons made from it would be less reliable and produce lower yields. If so, it would take perhaps 50kg of reactor-grade plutonium to make a bomb - meaning that the present stockpile would make about 1,000 bombs.

Plutonium has been separated at Sellafield because it can be used as a fuel for future reactors. The original idea

was to use it in fast-breeder reactors, but that strategy was abandoned in 1990. Mixed with uranium in the form of MOX (mixed oxide fuel) it could be burnt in normal thermal reactors such as Sizewell B. A single such reactor could burn 0.4 to 1.2 tons of plutonium a year.

So far, however, no British reactors are licensed to burn MOX. It could be exported for use in reactors overseas, although not many of those are yet licensed, either. In any case, the report says, countries with such reactors have plutonium of their own that they would like to burn.

Another alternative would be to dispose of plutonium by mixing it with waste, converting it into glass and placing it in a long-term depository. That would not destroy plutonium but render it inaccessible. But since no such depository yet exists, that could not be done yet and would waste a potential resource.

To prevent the stockpile getting any larger, reprocessing of spent fuel would be halted and the fuel stored as



The stored plutonium is highly toxic and could, it is feared, be used to make atomic bombs.

its high levels of radioactivity would prevent any terrorist getting close.

The committee does not reach any conclusions but says that all these options should be the subject of an independent review.

Michael Meacher, the En-

vironment Minister, confirmed yesterday that the Government is to consider the question of how radioactive waste is disposed of, as part of its long-term environmental strategy. A statement should be ready by the end of the year or early in 1999, he said.

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Disaster survivors face high suicide risk

BY IAN MURRAY

SURVIVORS of natural disasters are more likely to attempt suicide, according to researchers. Worst affected are those who have experienced a flood, followed by victims of hurricanes and earthquakes.

But victims of a tornado or severe storm appear to suffer no increased long-term depression, according to a study at 377 disaster sites in America and published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Suicide rates studied in the three years before the disaster and four years after found an overall increase of 13.8 per cent. The type of disaster influenced the suicide rate and the length of emotional trauma.

Suicide was triggered as much from the loss of shops, bars and churches as injury or loss of family. The rate for survivors of floods increased as time went by - 9.1 per cent after one year rising to 24.3 per cent after four years.

The report says that flooding probably causes emotional trauma for a longer period because it happens more frequently and causes more damage.

£80,000 payout for sheep dip poisoning

BY PAUL WILKINSON

HUNDREDS of farmworkers who used sheep dip unaware that it contained toxic organophosphates are expected to seek compensation after a landmark legal victory.

Robert Shepherd, a former farm manager, won an £80,000 out-of-court settlement from Lancashire County Council after his health was ruined by exposure to the chemical for 70 years. He suffered mood swings, memory losses and chronic fatigue.

Mr Shepherd, 63, said he started his action only after he was shunned by his grandchildren because he was irritable and unpredictable. Mr Shepherd worked at the Lancashire College of Agriculture at Myerscough. One of his tasks was ensuring up to 2,000 sheep were dipped two or three times a year. He said yesterday: "When I hear former soldiers describing Gulf War Syndrome it sounds exactly like what I am suffering. They were also in contact with organophosphates."

A spokesman for Unison, which backed Mr Shepherd, said: "The case will be seen as a marker for those who have been affected by the use of this chemical."

Bulgaria in Crisis

Emergency Appeal to Times Readers

LEFT TO FREEZE
Children like Yordan, who already had nourishment could die from cold and hunger this January unless aid reaches them now. With temperatures plummeting to -15°C Yordan's scant clothes and no shoes offer him little protection from the bitter cold and there is no money to heat his orphanage. There are 37,000 places in Bulgaria's orphanages.

Cold weather alert

No Money To Feed The Children No Money To Heat The Orphanages

Bulgaria is a country in the midst of a serious economic crisis. Now thousands of children are suffering terribly as winter reaches its coldest point. Urgent help is needed.

There is little money to heat the orphanages. Orphanage Directors are having to beg for food from local villages and rarely know where the next meal is coming from. In some areas children, like Yordan, are going hungry and the cold could prove fatal for many children this winter. Without aid this could be catastrophic for Bulgaria's orphanage children.

The European Children's Trust, sister charity of The Romanian Orphanage Trust, is ready to distribute emergency food packs, clothes and fuel to the orphanages in most need.

Your gift today will save lives and bring hope.

Send 200p to: European Children's Trust, c/o Orphanage Trust, 100, The Arcade, London, EC4A 3DF. Tel: 01273 299399 NOW. Registered Charity No. 633270

Please send whatever you can to help children survive the winter or call 01273 299399 NOW

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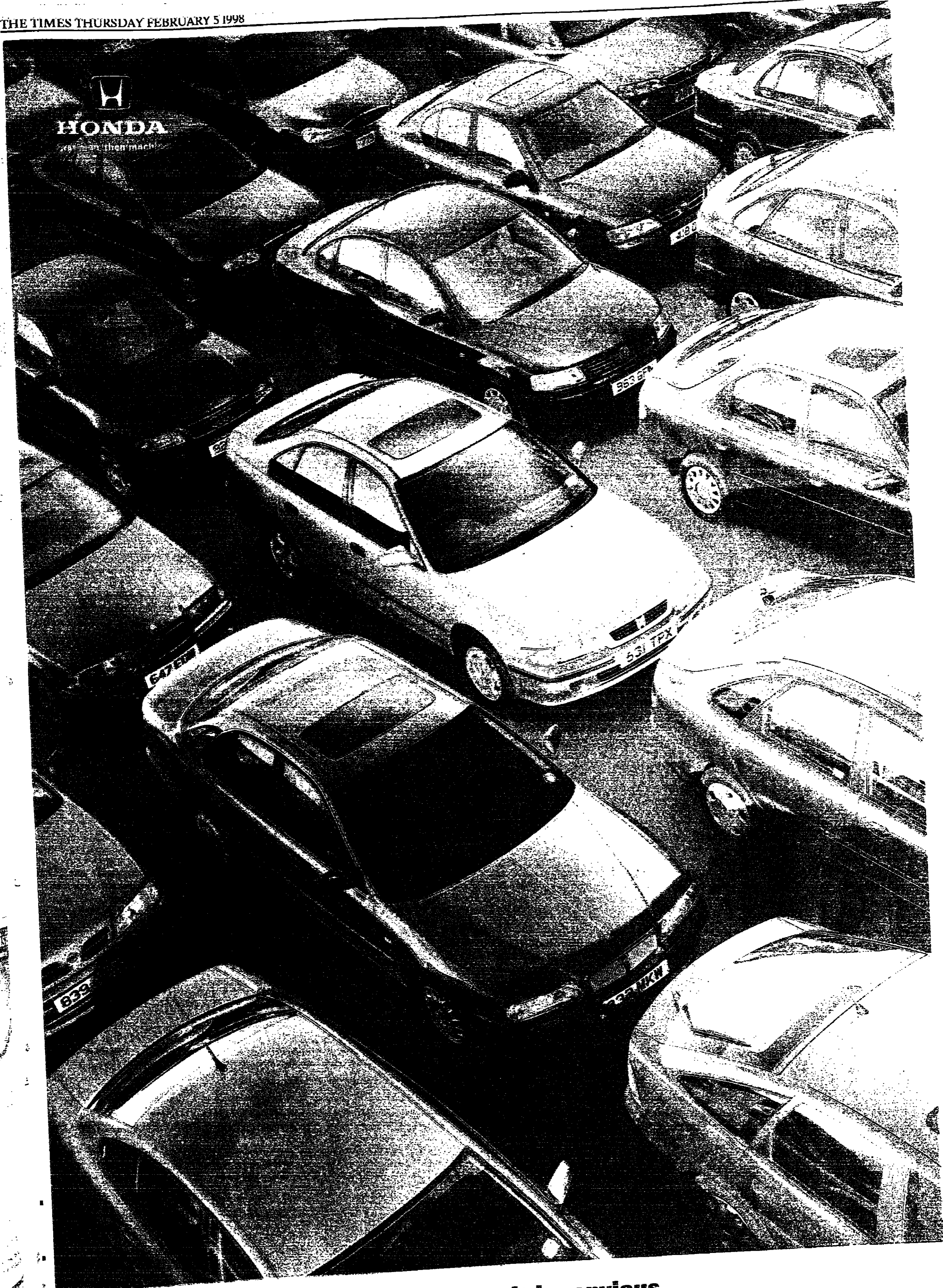
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Please act NOW - winter is here

سكنا من الالهي



Now, now, don't be envious.

Pictured is the 1998 Accord 2.0i SE, surrounded by some other fine motor cars. The trouble is, they're not quite as fine as the Accord. Six of them don't have a passenger airbag. None of them has cruise control. Seven of them have left their factories without rear

electric windows. And one of them doesn't even have ABS brakes. (To give it its due, it's also the only one apart from the Accord that is trimmed with wood.) You begin to get the idea. Six of them don't sport alloy wheels. Four of them will get you hot and bothered, as they don't have air-conditioning.

And six of them don't have an electric sunroof. But these are trifling deficiencies compared to other more fundamental issues. The Accord is the only one equipped with race-bred double-wishbone suspension, which keeps the wheels as vertical as possible, thus maximising traction, the 'feel' of

the steering, and the enjoyment of driving. The 2.0i SE will cost you just £16,795 on the road. For further information, please telephone 0345 159 159. And find out why, if you choose another car, you could end up seeing red. Technology you can enjoy, from Honda.

FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES: URBAN 23.0 MPG/11.3 L/100KM; EXTRA URBAN 38.2 MPG/24.1 L/100KM; COMBINED 32.1 MPG/16.8 L/100KM. INFORMATION CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. CAR SHOWN IS THE ACCORD 2.0i SE £16,795 ON THE ROAD PLUS £245 FOR METALIC PAINT.

Princess's driver may have been blinded by airbag

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE French magistrate investigating the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, has ordered a new examination of the wrecked Mercedes limousine after a medical report indicated that the car's airbags inflated before the final impact, possibly blinding the driver.

The investigation has refocused on the passenger safety systems of the Mercedes 280S after a medical expert concluded that a primary collision occurred with sufficient impact to release the airbags several seconds before the vehicle struck a concrete pillar in a Paris underpass on August 31, according to a report in *Le Parisien* yesterday.

The newspaper questioned whether the inflation of the

airbags might have "blinded" the driver and contributed to the loss of control of the vehicle. Investigators said yesterday that the car's airbags appeared to have inflated before the car struck the pillar in the Place de l'Alma underpass, although it was not clear what could have triggered the mechanism.

Police do not believe that a collision with the white Fiat Uno still being sought would have been sufficient to release the airbags. Forensic evidence indicates that the large limousine side-swiped the smaller car, causing only minor damage.

"If a Mercedes releases its airbags after hitting the back of a Fiat Uno, that would indicate a violent impact and

there wouldn't be much left of the Fiat Uno," one investigator said. The medical report suggesting a primary impact and the earlier release of the airbags was submitted by a trauma specialist at the La Pitié Salpêtrière hospital, where the Princess died, after an examination of injuries suffered by Trevor Rees-Jones, the Princess's bodyguard and the sole survivor of the crash.

The medical expert concluded that Mr Rees-Jones's injuries "suggest different impacts in succession, separated by several seconds, the first at the side and the second at the front" of the car. His head wounds indicated that the "first lateral impact" was "sufficiently strong to release the airbag, which would have protected the face but not the right side of the head, which was struck by a rigid, blunt object", the report said.

One explanation may be that the airbags opened when the side of the car struck the central pavement in the underpass, some distance before it hit the pillar. But car safety experts say that, in normal circumstances, that should not have triggered the airbags in the Mercedes because the airbags were intended to inflate in a frontal impact. Also, the car appears to have scraped the central area on the driver's side, which would not explain the nature of Mr Rees-Jones's first set of injuries.

Henri Paul, the French chauffeur who was also killed along with Dodi Fayed, was found to be three times over the drink-drive limit but the suggestion that his driving may also have been impeded by the car's airbags has added an unexpected twist.

An Australian couple have given police a video of their holiday in Paris after French authorities asked to examine it. Vlad Borovac and Chloe Papazahariakis shot the video outside the Ritz on the night of the crash. It reportedly shows a car of similar size to the white Fiat Uno that French police have been seeking.

Explosive charge will have scared the chauffeur

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

HENRI PAUL, the driver of the Mercedes, will have reacted with shock when the driver's airbag exploded in his face. The safety balloons housed in the steering wheel and passenger-side dashboard go off with the speed and sound of a gunshot at an impact of about 20mph.

That means the Mercedes could have had several crashes — but the airbags would have exploded as soon as the car's computers sensed it was at optimum speed for a life-threatening collision, proving useless in secondary impacts.

The question safety experts are asking is whether the detonation of the driver's airbag affected the ability of M Paul to steer the 280S saloon to safety. Car airbags are designed with an explosive charge of about eight grams of nitro-cellulose that detonate inert gases into a 30-litre bag.

There are many recorded cases of drivers being scared by the crack of the explosion. The charge inflates the bag within 40 milliseconds but the gas is discharged through vents and the bag deflated within a second of impact. However, the distraction for a driver could be critical, particularly one already over the alcohol limit. Even a second's lack of concentration could prove fatal at 90mph, when the car would have moved almost 50 yards in the time it took for the airbag to explode and deflate.

Experts estimate that airbags reduce casualties among drivers by more than half and among passengers by almost a third. However they detonate only once to provide a cushion against head injuries and are designed for primary impact, not for a series of collisions.



Leon will spend a week in his plywood crate without food or books but under the scrutiny of a video camera.

Artist is boxed in by his dedication

BY DALYA ALBERGE

A 38-YEAR-OLD artist is planning to make a show of himself by spending a week locked in a 7ft by 7ft plywood box.

The 6ft Brighton artist's minimal approach includes restricting himself to one name, Leon, and existing only on water during his incarceration. "He will not take books or magazines to help to time pass but will draw on the inside of the box, probably with a black wax crayon. As he will be unable to wash, he plans a ventilation fan for "mine and the public's sake".

The performance will take place at the Brighton Media Centre Gallery from February 7. Video cameras inside the box will allow visitors to view its contents, a comment on how "mankind manipulates the individual", the artist says.

Leon, who carries a living as a scenic artist for a design company, will not communicate with his audience. "There'll be some cordons round me so they can't tap or attack the box. It's solitary on a public scale."

Tate bricks, page 36

Alarming idea above its station

BY A CORRESPONDENT

AN IDEA for preventing tired train commuters from sleeping beyond their stations was accused of going slightly off the rails yesterday.

Clive Wallington, a rail passenger, has registered a special alarm with the Patent Office. The device would be programmed with the name of the desired station. Transmissions from trackside beacons would trigger it to start bleeping.

However passenger groups gave the device a muted welcome. Philip Wilks, spokesman for the Central Rail Users Consultative

Committee, said: "This device could have its uses as long as it was not too intrusive to other passengers. However, if there were passengers' alarms going off before every station, there would not be much chance of anyone getting much sleep."

Mr Wallington, from Colchester, Essex, said that he often saw tired rail users miss their stops because the guard's announcement was often "too late, incoherent or not loud enough". His idea, described to *New Scientist* magazine, is called the traveller's indicator device.

Pupils train as counsellors to help upset classmates

BY DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of pupils are to be trained as counsellors to replace teachers as the first line of emotional support in the classroom. The children's advice charity ChildLine has been swamped with applications from schools to join a scheme that teaches children how to help classmates with their problems.

A trial run in 80 schools showed that pupil counsellors dealt with problems more effectively than teachers.

At Manchester Grammar School, 40 boys aged 14 to 16 were trained in counselling by Manchester University. They

seek adult help if they came across serious problems such as child abuse.

"One of our biggest categories of callers is children asking for help so they can help their friends," Ms Howarth said. "We felt a better way might be going into schools and giving children the skills they need at the beginning rather than over the telephone."

"As adults we like to feel we are in control, but very often the children want to be in control of their own world. It is crucial young people also know when to break confidences and bring adults in."

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سكنيا من الاموال

A change of landscape for the big picture

PLYMOUTH

"I will miss the people and the Dolphin pub," Beryl Cook says. "The Dolphin is the jewel in the Barbican's crown. I particularly like some of the rougher pubs. I like the people in there. The Barbican was the only part of Plymouth city centre to survive bombing, and the Dolphin is one of the last pubs not turned up for the benefit of tourists."

BRISTOL

"I have always been there for rockers and leather pubs," Beryl Cook says. "What people do not appreciate is that I am not just painting people enjoying themselves. I like to see everything that's going on. But the Barbican in Bristol also has a reputation for rougher streets and long queues for the public houses and canals."

Beryl Cook is leaving the city that provided her images of fat people having fun, Simon de Bruxelles reports

THE South Seas had Gouguin. Venice had Canaletto. And Plymouth had Beryl Cook, until now. The woman whose exuberant paintings of fat ladies have made her one of Britain's most successful artists is leaving the city that has been her inspiration for 30 years.

At the age of 70, she is moving from the four-storey Georgian house she once ran as a B&B, overlooking Plymouth Hoe, to be nearer her three great-grandchildren in Bristol. She leaves behind the pubs and clubs whose clientele

she has immortalised in her larger-than-life paintings, which sell for up to £14,000.

Mrs Cook admits that she will be sorry to leave Plymouth, and in particular the characters who have provided her inspiration, when she moves the 130 miles to her new home later this month. "The people of Bristol, however, should be aware that she is looking forward to exploring to find new inspiration, although she jokes that she paints fat people only because they take up more space. "It fills up the page so I don't

have to do a background. That's the reason for that," she said. "As I drew people, they get bigger and bigger so there is less space behind them. But I do like the round shapes."

Fat people also seem to enjoy themselves more, she adds. "I am motivated by people enjoying themselves, or doing something that I enjoy." Her local pub, The Dolphin, features in several of her pictures. She is a Friday-night regular there.

The pub, on the Barbican quayside, has stone floors and a rough-and-ready reputation, which is the way Mrs Cook likes it. She relates with satisfaction how one study acquaintance put his head around the door but could not bring himself to go in.

Another regular, Laurie Jackson, said yesterday: "Beryl is a great local character and a friend who comes in here every Friday night and sometimes at weekends too. One of her pictures shows the landlord sitting at the table counting his takings with the piles of coins in front of him. We hope she'll come back to visit us."

Unlike her bold and brassy subjects, Mrs Cook is the retiring type, and modest about her work. Her husband, John, was the boy next door when she grew up in Reading and they have been married for almost half a century.

She recalled: "John once said to me as we were sitting in a terrible pub in Union Street. 'I don't see why we have to sink quite so low'. But I like to see everything that's going on."

"I particularly like some of the rougher pubs, I must say. I like the people in there. In



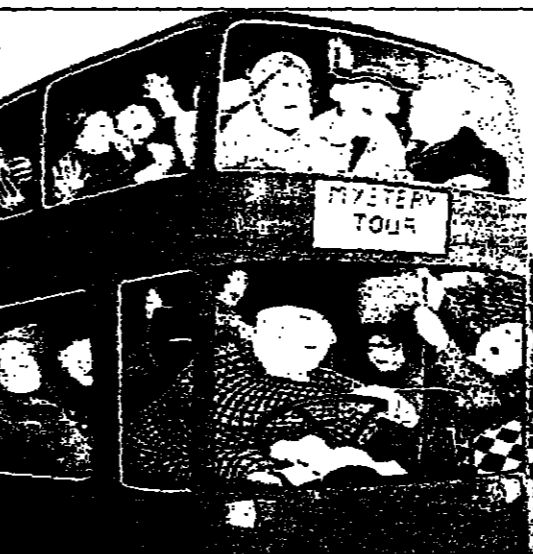
A painter of substance: Cook says that fat people seem to have more fun and they "fill up the page so I don't have to do a background"



The Birthday Cake: the artist is the retiring type, but the subjects of her paintings are definitely not

GENTLE HUMOUR IS SECRET OF SUCCESS, AND THE JOKE IS ON THE CRITICS

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT



From My Granny was a frightful bore ...

BERYL COOK was discovered in her late forties when an actress staying at her guest house mentioned her pictures to a friend at a local art centre. The show that followed, in 1975, was an immediate hit with the public who loved her voluptuous fat ladies in short skirts. Books, greetings cards and an OBE followed, although her art was not to the taste of some critics.

Cook is a gentle satirist who brings out the funny side of life. She once said that she "only paints people who are having a nice time". That approach is undoubtedly reflected in her art but she divides the reviewers, perhaps for that reason.

While the London Evening Standard critic Brian Sewell has described her work as "anti-art" with a kind of vulgar streak which has nothing to do with art, Julian Spalding, the director of the Glasgow Museums, said he would rather have a Cook than a Damien Hirst in his collection.

It is the vulgarity of the paintings that sells millions of greeting cards and inspires novelists such as Tom Sharpe to put her work on their dust-jackets. Like Benny Hill, Cook's humour crosses boundaries, touching an international funny bone. She sells as well in Britain as Italy and Holland.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

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Church couple make the best of neighbours

Paul Wilkinson on vicars with close relationship

TWO Anglican vicars who married after meeting at theological college have been allocated adjoining parishes for their first appointments as priests-in-charge.

In what diocesan officials say may just be divine intervention, the two vacancies arose within months of each other. The Rev David Griffiths and Susan, his wife, will be able to shepherd their separate flocks from the same vicarage. From this summer

Mr Griffiths, 44, will take charge of the Oakenshaw cum Woodlands parish in Bradford, while his wife becomes vicar of Wyke, two miles away in West Yorkshire.

The couple, who married two years ago in Keighley, will live in Mrs Griffiths's vicarage. Her husband said: "The diocese have agreed to provide me with an office instead of at my church to enable me to work but I want to live with Susan. However, I may

well walk to work in the morning."

The Venerable David Shreeve, Archdeacon of Bradford, said: "It was hoped it would be possible to find posts for David and Susan which were geographically close but their was never any suggestion of a package deal with the two parishes concerned. Both have been considered separately and on their own merits for the parishes to which they've been appointed. But we're delighted at the way things have worked out for them."

Mr Griffiths — who once made cars for British Leyland and still has a passion for old motorcycles — was ordained in 1994. He is at present the curate at Thwaites Brow, on the outskirts of Bradford. He said: "I feel God has certainly been smiling down on us. He's most certainly had a hand in all this. It's a happy situation to be in. We consider ourselves very lucky."

Mrs Griffiths, 36, who worked for the Inland Revenue for 14 years before her ordination in 1994, is curate at Ingrow parish, near Bradford. She was the first to be interviewed, back in December, for her job. Then last month her husband was offered the post



Susan and David Griffiths who will work from the same vicarage. "We consider ourselves very lucky," he said.

of priest-in-charge of Oakenshaw cum Woodlands.

He said: "When I received the letter telling me I'd been given the job I just gasped. We had both finished our training and needed to get jobs. Some married couples in the same position as us do carry out

their jobs in separate parishes and live a fair way from each other. But we were determined not to conduct our marriage long-distance. We just couldn't believe our luck when we landed these posts.

"I would imagine the odds are extremely unlikely of some-

thing like this happening." His parish has a population of only 2,000, with a regular congregation of 60. His wife's parish contains 7,000 people but has a congregation of only 70.

Mrs Griffiths said: "We're both delighted with the way

things have turned out and we both feel very lucky indeed."

A Church of England official said he was not aware of any other couples in adjoining parishes, "although there are married couples who work closely together in the Church".

BISHOPS TO KEEP SEATS IN LORDS

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

Bishops in the Church of England will continue to sit in the House of Lords as of right after reform of the Upper House, government sources have disclosed.

Although members of other faiths and denominations will also have seats, the 26 bishops will be there as representatives of the established Church. Members of other faiths will be there as individuals and not as formal representatives.

The Government's decision to abolish the voting

rights of hereditary peers provoked fears among the bishops that their days there might be numbered. The issue is high on the agenda as the General Synod prepares to debate reforms to central church structures next week.

The reforms, which will create a central policy-making Archbishop's Council, are intended to cut out bureaucracy. But they will also include a reduction in the number of church commissioners, who manage the finances.



The Orbiter

Beijing ban ends Orbiter attempt

THE attempt by the *Orbiter* to be the first balloon to fly non-stop around the world was scrapped yesterday after its three European crew were refused entry into Chinese airspace.

Alan Noble, the flight director, said in Geneva that they would fly across India and the Bay of Bengal to see how far they could get and try to beat the aeronautical endurance record. "Even if China said yes now, it would be too late," he added. "The aim to fly round the world this time has to be given up."

The vast silver *Orbiter*, which lifted off from the Swiss Alps last Wednesday and on Tuesday broke the record for non-stop balloon flight, was south of Delhi when the decision to alter course was taken.

The Swiss pilot, Bertrand Picard, a 39-year-old psychiatrist, had told controllers that they had seen dawn rise over the Taj Mahal in Agra. "With that sort of experience, you can't feel that this journey was wasted," he said.

The other crew are Andy Elson, of Britain, and Wim Verstraeten of Belgium. Beijing had kept silent despite appeals from the embassies of Switzerland, Britain and Belgium, and by the Swiss Government. Earlier, China had cited security reasons for its refusal, suggesting the *Orbiter* would be a danger to civil air traffic.

Crossing China on the sea stream had been vital to their chances of floating around the world before their fuel ran out. But Mr Noble said they would now aim to beat the record of nine days, four minutes for the longest flight without refuelling by plane or balloon. "They are having fun. Let them stay up while they are enjoying it," (Reuters)

Swampy faces drugs charge

By STEPHEN FARRELL

THE roads protester Swampy has been charged with possession of magic mushrooms less than a week after his parents announced he had given up underground protests and started voluntary work.

Daniel Hooper, 24, will appear before Penwith magistrates in Penzance, Cornwall, on March 30, charged with possession of a small quantity of prepared mushrooms, a Class A drug. Mr Hooper, from High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, was arrested on Tuesday on the Penzance seaford after complaints that motorists were being stopped and asked for money.

He was arrested and searched by police officers who allegedly found the dried material in his pocket. He was taken to Camborne police station and charged before being released on bail.



Hooper, allegedly found with magic mushrooms

His arrest comes 12 months after he achieved celebrity status among underground road protesters by spending six days holding out against bailiffs inside a 30ft deep tunnel beneath the proposed £65 million Exeter to Honiton dual carriageway.

Fossils add 30m years to animal origins

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE origin of animals has been pushed back at least 30 million years by the discovery of perfectly preserved microscopic fossils in a Chinese mine.

They show that sponges and other simple animals existed 570 million years ago, before the explosion of life in the Cambrian period, 540 million years ago, which gave the Earth almost all its principal animal groups.

Many palaeontologists had despaired of finding the original ancestors of animals because they were small, soft and did not fossilise well. The finds, in a phosphate mine in central Guizhou province, show that under some circumstances even fragile specimens can be preserved.

Two teams report the finds simultaneously. In *Nature*, Dr Shuhai Xiao, of the Botanical Gardens at Harvard, and his colleagues describe algae and microscopic animal embryos, while in *Science* a team from Taiwan and Nanjing, led by Dr Chia-Wei Li, identify sponges.

All the fossils are tiny, with the largest sponges less than a millimetre across. The creatures lived in a shallow sea that was apparently engulfed by large amounts of dissolved phosphates.

The history of animals may be traced back even further, Andrew Knoll of Harvard says: "Over the next few years you are going to see people finding comparable fossils in yet older rocks."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Sex abuse cases hit reputation of Church

Irish Catholics are going to church less, with many disillusioned by sex scandals, according to an opinion poll. The survey for RTE Television found that over 90 per cent of Catholics believe that claims of paedophilia and the case of Bishop Eamonn Casey, who fathered a child with an American divorcee, have damaged the Church's authority. The poll showed weekly church attendance was down by 30 per cent in less than 25 years. Only six out of ten Catholics go to Mass weekly.

Rail drink-driver

A railman who drove a train while double the legal alcohol limit was jailed for five months by magistrates in Birkenhead, Alan Waters, 29, from Birkenhead, admitted exceeding the prescribed limit on his early morning shift.

Fish pond verdict

John Nicholson, 50, from Warsop, Nottinghamshire, was cleared at Nottingham Crown Court of causing grievous bodily harm to James White, a security officer, who was attacked while guarding his mother's fish pond.

Laser pen fine

A man who shone a laser pen at motorway drivers was fined £100 with £50 costs by magistrates in Droitwich, Hereford and Worcester, Uppal Singh, 19, from Wolverhampton, admitted causing harassment, alarm or distress.

Airport takes off

A new £8.6 million passenger terminal is to be built at Inverness airport, which handles 400,000 passengers, after the Scottish Office gave the go-ahead to Highlands and Islands Airports to sign a Private Finance Initiative deal.

A million to go

At 1.20pm today there will be one million minutes left to the start of the millennium, says the charity Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood, which hopes to raise a pound a minute for a specialist ward at the new Bristol Children's Hospital.

1959 blood sample gives vital clue to origin of Aids

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE point at which Aids made its fatal leap from ape to man can now be more accurately fixed after the discovery of the virus in a blood sample taken from a man in Central Africa in 1959.

The original source of the HIV-1 virus, which is responsible for the bulk of the global epidemic that has cost five million lives so far, was almost certainly a chimpanzee, from which closely related viruses have been isolated.

How HIV-1 got from chimpanzees to man is not known. But it is possible that close contact with blood—perhaps in the course of butchering a chimpanzee to eat—could have been the cause. It would have had to happen only once, since the evidence is that the Aids epidemic started with a single human case.

The creation of a family tree using genetic data from the sample and from modern HIV shows that the 1959 version of

the virus was close to the origin. *Nature* magazine reports.

Simon Wain-Hobson of the Pasteur Institute in Paris believes that the 1959 virus is just a few genetic changes, and a few years, from the virus that founded the epidemic. It has signs no more than 10 or 15 years, given what we know about the accumulation of substitutions in the HIV genome.

That would place the time at which the virus infected human beings for the first time probably in the late 1940s or early 1950s. The disease was established for decades in Africa before it was recognised as a worldwide threat.

For HIV-2, the other Aids virus, the source was a sooty mangabey, another primate that occupies the forests of central western Africa. Both viruses were capable of generating an Aids epidemic, Dr Wain-Hobson says, but HIV-1

has a faster disease course and a more efficient transmission.

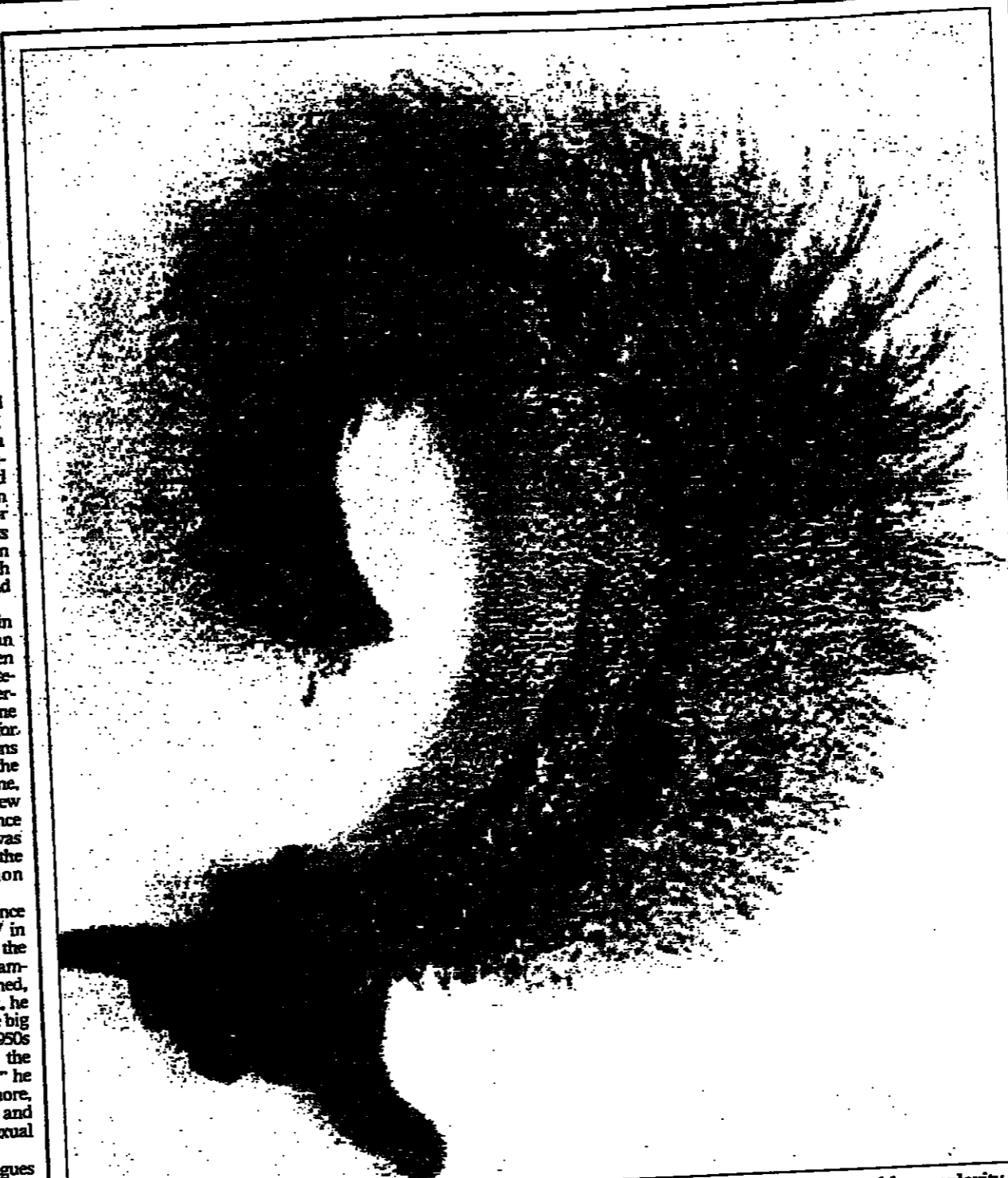
But what turned Aids into a global epidemic? In their *Nature* paper, David Ho and colleagues dare to mention an idea that has been taboo for the past decade: that mass immunisation campaigns in Africa by the World Health Organisation helped to spread the disease.

That was first suggested in *The Times* in May 1987, in an article by Pearce Wright, then science editor, and immediately denied by the WHO. Yesterday Jose Esparrago, vaccine development adviser for UNAIDS, the United Nations body that has taken over the WHO's Aids programme, said: "There has been no new evidence in the ten years since then to suggest that HIV was significantly spread by the smallpox vaccination campaign."

Epidemiological evidence linking the spread of HIV in each African country with the extent of the smallpox campaign had been examined, and found to show no link, he said. "I still believe that the big social changes of the 1950s brought the virus out of the jungle and into the cities," he said. "People moved more, tribal customs changed and there was more sexual contact."

Dr Ho and his colleagues agree that these changes may have been the most important. But Laurance Geris, the London GP who originally suggested the smallpox hypothesis, said that it still deserved careful investigation. "It is important to understand where Aids comes from in order to treat it and prevent new epidemics of new diseases," he said yesterday.

If Aids emerged from the jungle, there is little to prevent other diseases from doing the same—indeed, Ebola virus has already made sporadic appearances in Africa and outside. But it lacks the subtlety of HIV, killing people so fast that the epidemics peter out before the virus can be spread very far.



The Pompeii worm lives at temperatures hot enough to kill any other creature of comparable complexity

At 80C the worm doesn't burn

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE world's hottest worm can survive in water close to boiling point, an expedition to the bottom of the Pacific has proved.

The Pompeii worm, two to three inches long, lives in water at more than 80C, a temperature hot enough to kill any other known creature of comparable complexity. The previous record was held by the Sahara Desert ant, which can forage at temperatures close to 55C.

Craig Cary, of the University of Delaware, believes that enzymes in the bacteria may prove useful in science and industry because they can operate at such high temperatures. Heat-loving enzymes can help to dislodge oil inside wells and to turn cornstarch into sugar.

The worms live in tubes attached to sub-sea vents, places where water heated by volcanic activity emerges into the sea. Using a submersible craft, Dr Cary and colleagues dived to vents on the East Pacific Rise west of Costa Rica.

They inserted thermometers into the tubes where the worms live and found that the worms' tails have to endure temperatures of 80C, although their heads emerge into water at 20C.

Dr Cary reports in *Nature* that the worms are covered in bacteria that also survive in the hot water and may help by providing some insulation. He says: "No other organism on the planet exists routinely for such a prolonged period of time in such an extreme thermal environment."

£7m hunt for E coli cure

By A Correspondent

DOCTORS are about to start testing antibodies that could lead to a cure for the deadly *E. coli* food bug.

The researchers at Manchester University are also close to a breakthrough against an infection called MRSA, which affects hospitals, is highly resistant to antibiotics and can kill.

Professor James Burnie, his wife, Dr Ruth Matthews, and Dr Tony Martin yesterday received £7.3 million from investors to start tests on possible cures for the two bugs. They have isolated antibodies in people who have recovered from *E. coli* and MRSA and used them as a genetic

key to create antibodies in large amounts. It is hoped that the antibodies will enable treatments to become available early in the next century.

E. coli is spread through contact with infected livestock or meat. An outbreak in Scotland in 1996 killed 20 people, the world's highest toll from the bug.

The doctors work for Neutec Pharma, a university research company that received the grant from the investment group 3i and the Dutch bank ABN-Amro Hoare Govett. Professor Burnie said: "It is our intention to start human trials in the next two years."

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Farmers jeer as minister says no more handouts

JACK CUNNINGHAM was jeered and heckled yesterday after telling farmers that he was not prepared to write more blank cheques for what he called the economy's most over-subsidised sector.

The Agriculture Minister drew groans when he said port blockades against cheap imports merely sufficed government resistance to farmers' demands and impeded efforts to persuade the European Union to lift the ban on British beef.

In a speech that often struck a sardonic note, he said: "If I had come here today and waved a cheque you would have gone away happy for at least a month or so, but in reality the way forward is not more subsidy."

Dr Cunningham told 1,000 delegates at the annual conference of the National Farmers' Union (NFU): "I understand that you would like more money. So would many other sectors of the British economy. So would the health service. So would teachers in schools."

Farming was receiving unprecedented support, he said. In 1997-98 the livestock industry alone would get £2.7 billion. "No responsible Gov-

The message was blunt and not what the audience

wanted. Michael Hornsby reports

ernment can contemplate maintaining [such] exceptional levels of subsidy indefinitely. There is no bottomless reserve of taxpayers' money that would allow us to do so."

Sir David Naish, the outgoing president of the NFU, greeted Dr Cunningham with the warning that he was entering a room full of "angry, frightened farmers who fear for their future".

After Dr Cunningham had departed, Sir David said he had left his audience "disgruntled, dissatisfied and disillusioned", adding: "I cannot believe that a minister of Her Majesty's Government could disregard our legitimate request for equality with such

apparent lack of interest or concern."

In a question-and-answer session, Dr Cunningham heard speakers accuse him of lacking moral backbone, indulging in political waffle, allowing the farming industry to bleed to death and failing to stop potentially infected foreign beef entering Britain.

Farmers were particularly angry at the Government's failure to take full advantage of EU aid to offset the effects of the strong pound, which has made food imports cheaper and reduced the value of some subsidies.

One speaker was loudly cheered when he complained that at least eight other EU member states with appreciating currencies had applied for and obtained such aid, partly paid for by British taxpayers, while British farmers had got nothing.

Dr Cunningham retorted that he did not regard the £85 million aid package announced before Christmas as nothing. Nor did he accept that the Government was obliged "to match with a subsidy every last ecu that EU governments give to their farmers". Farmers' incomes

might be falling now, he said, but he reminded his audience that between 1992 and 1996, when the pound was weak, British farmers had benefited enormously, enjoying bigger income rises than their counterparts anywhere in the EU apart from Spain and Portugal.

He was particularly scathing about the continuing port protests by farmers. "We are not going to negotiate with people under duress," he said. "Blockading the ports, and interfering with trade, I cannot say too clearly, is totally counter-productive. It just gets us aggro in Brussels, the very people we are trying to get on our side."

"It is particularly ironic that the protests should focus on trade with the Republic of Ireland, who are among our staunchest supporters in seeking to get the beef ban lifted."

There were groans and shouts of "No, No!" when Dr Cunningham said that people had been moving out of agriculture for years and "there is very little I can do about that".

Further decline in the number of people employed in agriculture was inevitable. Taxpayers were no longer willing "to subsidise indef-

initely farming for its own sake, even if they are willing to do so in order to help the environment or preserve and develop remote rural communities".

The National Farmers' Union (NFU) yesterday elected Ben Gill to be its new president. Mr Gill, a Yorkshire farmer, was deputy to the outgoing president, Sir David Naish.



Enough is enough: Jack Cunningham telling farmers that there is no bottomless reserve of taxpayers' money

Labour MPs in attack on New Deal

By Nicholas Watt

TONY BLAIR'S job-creation scheme came under fire yesterday from a Labour-controlled Commons committee which said that the £3 billion New Deal had been implemented in haste.

In the strongest Labour criticism of the programme so far, the MPs urged the Prime Minister to drop his plans to force the young unemployed to join the New Deal scheme. They voiced fears that the scheme's "conscripts" could be driven to crime.

The report from the Scottish Affairs Select Committee, chaired by David Marshall, Labour MP for Glasgow Shetleston, underlines the unease on the Labour benches about the programme for tackling youth unemployment.

The Government intends to spend £3.15 billion from the "windfall tax" on the privatised utilities to help 18 to 24-year-olds who have been out of work for more than six months. The scheme, which will come into force in April, will offer six months' subsidised employment or one year's education and training.

The MPs, who examined pilot schemes already running, said they supported the broad aims of the New Deal. But they said: "Witnesses suggested from experience that conscripts would demoralise a whole group or that, faced with an option they did not wish to take and which might pay them little more than benefit, some might drop off the register and take to crime."

In their conclusion the MPs said: "The New Deal programme 'leaves'... all the marks of having been implemented in haste in order not to lose impetus and credibility. A great many fingers must be crossed that it will all come out all right on the night."

A Scottish Office spokesman welcomed the report yesterday, but insisted that the New Deal programme would transform the lives of young people for the better.

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons, trade and industry questions, debate on English revenues. Support Grant reports short debate on BT pricing in Cornwall. In the Lords: Human Rights Bill, third reading; Greater London Authority (References) Bill, third reading; various orders.

Fashionable guru is illuminating the centre ground

THE most intriguing member of Tony Blair's Washington party is not a politician but an academic—Anthony Giddens, director of the London School of Economics. He has emerged as the guru of Blairism, whose influence also stretches across the Atlantic to President Clinton's advisers. He has become so fashionable in these circles that he was the subject of a long profile last October in that weather-vane of political chic, *The New Yorker*.

Professor Giddens is a distinguished and prolific sociologist, but his political role derives from his analysis of how both socialism and conservatism have disintegrated and his advocacy of a "third way". This phrase formed a central theme of Mr Clinton's State of the Union address last week. The professor

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

has close connections with Mr Blair's advisers, notably David Milliband, head of the Downing Street Policy Unit. Mr Milliband edited a collection of essays in 1994 entitled *Reinventing the Left*, whose opening chapter was written by Professor Giddens. The book was published by the Polity Press, which the professor had founded.

The links have been maintained since the election. Although Professor Giddens is not part of the Blair inner circle, he was invited to participate in the so-called Chequers One seminar three months ago held by Mr Blair for Hillary

Clinton and senior American officials. Like the successor Chequers Two seminar tomorrow in Washington, this was a free-wheeling discussion looking at the common problem of how to reinvent the politics of the Centre-Left in face of changed attitudes to the State.

Professor Giddens has helped to define the nature of this problem, notably in his book *Beyond Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics*. He argues that conventional politics has been challenged by three interconnected changes: globalisation, de-rationalisation (the need for traditional institutions to justify themselves) and social reflexivity (the replacement of past certainties by the need for people to take more decisions for themselves). As a system based on

controls, socialism is, he argues, unable to cope with these changes. But conservatism faces profound problems as well because of the challenge to existing structures and attitudes. He distinguishes conservatism from the Right, which during the 1980s became associated with neo-liberalism and the primacy of market forces. But neo-liberalism has become internally contradictory by threatening traditional institutions such as the family.

Instead, he proposes a reconstituted radical politics which "draws



Giddens: close to Blair's advisers

upon philosophic conservatism but preserves some of the core values hitherto associated with socialist thought". In particular, he emphasises the need to rethink the welfare state, to shift from the traditional passive and reactive approach to an active one where government provides security to allow people to take risks. His vision of "positive welfare" chimes with what Gordon Brown is trying to do with his Welfare to Work programme.

Professor Giddens is a social scientist producing theories rather

than detailed policies. However, his influence is a measure of the search among Blairites and Clintonites for an ideology that will underpin their campaigning rhetoric and their concentration on the centre ground. As he said in *The New Yorker* profile: "We need a popular name for the kind of political theory that is emerging now. There was communism, socialism, capitalism, Thatcherism, and we have something else now. It boils down to a theory of social justice and individualism in the context of the global market society, but we need a shorter name. Perhaps an acronym?" That would be a real achievement of Chequers Two tomorrow.

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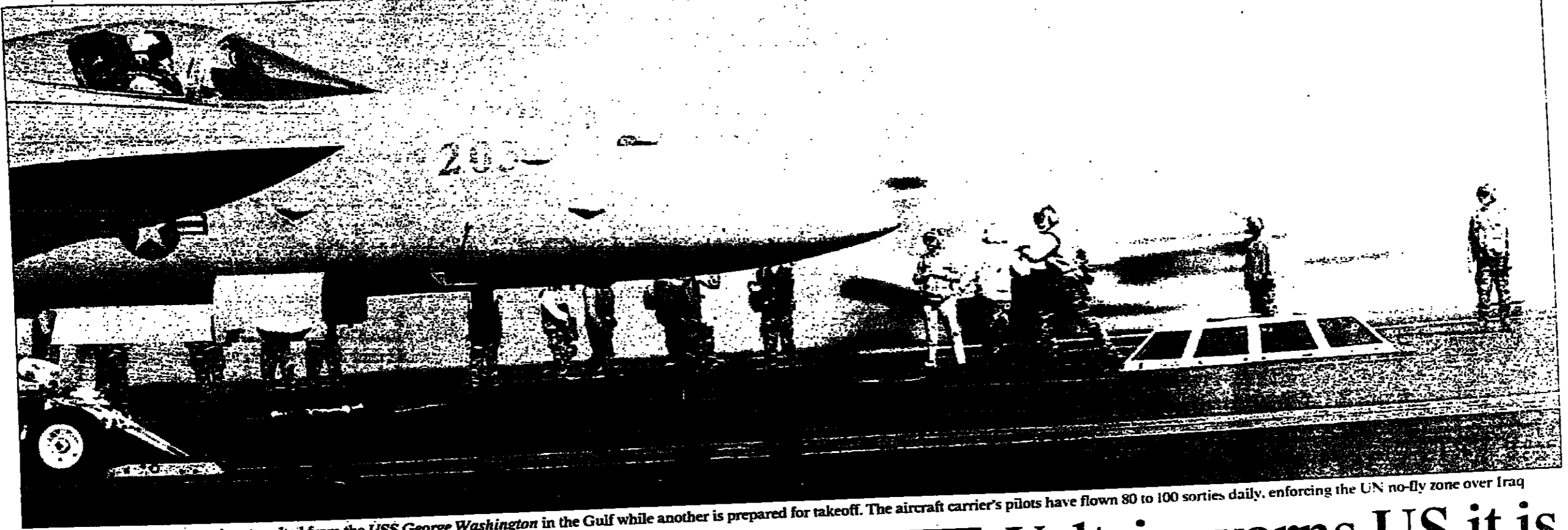
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Labour MPs in attack on New Deal



A US Navy F17 Hornet is catapulted from the USS George Washington in the Gulf while another is prepared for takeoff. The aircraft carrier's pilots have flown 80 to 100 sorties daily, enforcing the UN no-fly zone over Iraq

Cook calls on Saudis to back tough Gulf action

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

DIPLOMACY

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, will today warn Saudi Arabia that, unless it backs tough allied action to stop President Saddam Hussein of Iraq acquiring weapons of mass destruction, no Gulf nation will be secure. Mr Cook flew to Riyadh last night on an emergency visit to the Gulf to drum up support for British and American military preparations. He will meet Prince Saud al-Faisal, the Foreign Minister, today before going on to Kuwait, where he is to hold talks this afternoon with the ruling family on the threats posed by Iraqi stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. He returns to Britain tomorrow night. Before leaving, Mr Cook said Britain wanted the support of the Gulf for the "intensive effort" the allies were making to find a peaceful

solution. He said Saddam was continuing attempts to build up an arsenal of terror, and it was vital he was stopped. "Saddam would be making a big mistake if he underestimated our resolve to make sure he does not keep chemical or biological weapons," Mr Cook told the Conference of Independent Territories yesterday. "If he is wise, he will respond to the diplomatic initiatives while he still has time to do so." Under growing military and diplomatic pressure, Saddam appeared close last night to making a conditional offer to open eight presidential palaces to United Nations inspectors. Russia and France, each with senior envoys in Baghdad, reported progress, but it was far from clear whether Saddam was considering a genuine climbdown. Details of his reported offer were sketchy, but it seemed to



Robin Cook in London yesterday urges Saddam to respond to diplomatic initiatives

fall far short of the total compliance demanded by the US and Britain. Amr Moussa, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, said he had been assured by his Iraqi counterpart that Baghdad was close to opening eight palaces at the centre of the crisis over weapons inspections. "The details I cannot give you. They were a bit unclear in certain parts of the call," said Mr Moussa. According to CNN, 15 members of the UN Security Council would be invited to pick five inspectors each, along with two each from the 21 members of the UN Special Commission (Unsc) on disarming Iraq. They could have unfettered access for one month, but the teams would report to the Security Council, not Unsc, which Baghdad sees as a hostile body dominated by America and Britain. The team would be allowed to bring X-ray, infra-red or

any analytical equipment needed during their trips to the palaces, which for reasons of sovereignty and dignity Iraq says would be termed visits, not inspections. Russia has challenged Britain's view that military action can be taken because Baghdad has violated the terms of the Gulf War ceasefire. Sergei Lavrov, the Russia's UN ambassador, declared that Moscow did not consider Iraq in "material breach" of its ceasefire obligations. Britain is seeking a new Security Council resolution restoring the UN's authorisation of the use of force before the Gulf War, because Baghdad has broken its ceasefire commitment to co-operate with arms inspections. In a further development, Turkey climbed off the fence to bless US efforts to force Saddam to accept UN inspections. Mesut Yilmaz, the

Yeltsin warns US it is heading for world war

FROM ROBIN LUNGE IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday issued a vehement criticism of United States policy towards Iraq, saying that President Clinton was "making too much noise" and that the use of force could lead to world war. Addressing Russian journalists during a meeting with Anatoli Chubais, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Yeltsin said the UN Security Council would vote against the use of force against Iraq - indicating that Russia was prepared to exercise its veto. "By acting this way in Iraq, he [Mr Clinton] may run into a world war. He is making too much noise over this, too much noise. These weapons must be handled with care and no threats should be made that Iraq will be inundated with planes and bombs," Mr Yeltsin said. His comments were the most hostile towards Mr Clinton since the crisis began. The two leaders spoke by telephone earlier this week and both had agreed that a negoti-

ated settlement was the most desirable outcome. The latest statement coincided with a Duma resolution calling for condemnation of the United States and for Russia to consider lifting sanctions unilaterally in the event of air strikes. The resolution is non-binding, but Mr Yeltsin was clearly anxious to be seen in accord with the country's pro-Iraq mood. Communist and nationalist politicians have been trying to whip up public outrage by accusing the United States of threatening to use tactical nuclear weapons against Saddam Hussein. Mr Yeltsin stopped short of such charges, although his reference to "these weapons" was likely to add to the impression in Russia that a nuclear strike is under consideration. Moscow has been insisting that its diplomacy was coming to fruition. On Monday it announced that after talks with Viktor Posuvalyuk, Mr Yeltsin's special envoy, the Iraqis had proposed a com-

promise under which UN weapons inspectors would be allowed access to eight sites previously denied to them. The Iraqis initially denied making any such offer, but yesterday a CNN report from Baghdad appeared to confirm the Russian version. Russian diplomatic efforts to end the crisis continued yesterday. Yevgeni Primakov, the Foreign Minister, had a telephone conversation with Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State and Mr Yeltsin was due to speak to Tony Blair and President Chirac of France. Mr Posuvalyuk was continuing talks in Baghdad, where he was joined by a French special envoy, Bertrand Dufourcq. Washington: In response to Mr Yeltsin's criticism, the White House said yesterday: "If Saddam Hussein complies with the UN resolutions, there will be no need to invoke military force" (Bronwen Maddox writes). Washington and the UN Security Council gave a cool reception to Iraq's offer to open a limited number of sites to inspectors.

Leading article, page 21

Pledge to retaliate if Saddam attacks

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

PRESIDENT Yeltsin's warning that the Iraq crisis could lead to a third world war was dismissed by an Israeli official yesterday as "far-fetched". But he asserted Israel's right to retaliate if attacked by Iraqi missiles. Briefing journalists, he said that Israeli intelligence believed that at least 45 Iraqi biological warheads were still unaccounted for and that just one dropped on Tel Aviv could cause "many hundreds" of deaths and injuries. The official, whose remarks were part of a new Israeli policy of speaking openly about the crisis, said that as well as a small number of

ISRAEL

Soviet-supplied Scud missiles surviving from the 1991 Gulf War, Baghdad could be in possession of other "delivery vehicles" from China, North Korea and Libya. He recalled that the US and Israel had threatened a "devastating" response in the event of an Iraqi chemical or biological attack on his country, increasing speculation that such a reaction would be nuclear - possibly a neutron bomb dropped on Baghdad. Moshe Arens, the Defence Minister during the Gulf War, implored Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, not to show restraint this time. He told Israeli radio that "turning the other cheek is in neither the Jewish nor the Israeli character".

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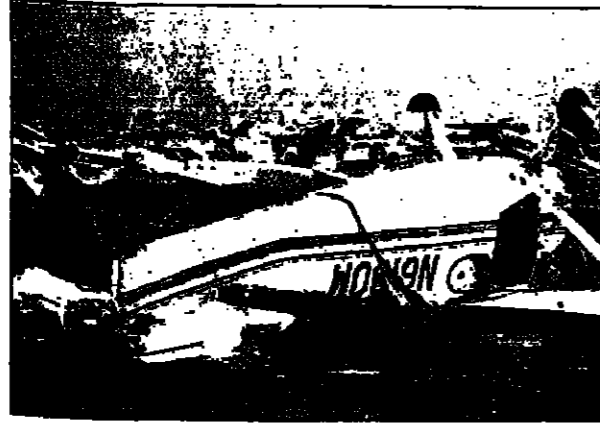
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Upturned aircraft at North Perry airport in Florida

US coasts battered as storms sweep in

FROM GILES WHITTILL IN LOS ANGELES

DELAYED but still deadly, the first big El Niño storm of the winter has blown into California, bringing gale-force winds and torrential rain along a 500-mile front. At the same time a second storm system, also blamed on the warming of the Pacific, brought flooding and chaos to much of the American South-East.

Nicknamed "Bigfoot" by meteorologists, the western

storm blew ashore late on Monday and pounded California's coast for 36 hours, flooding freeways, knocking out power grids and filling beachfront homes with mud.

Winds of 85mph uprooted mature trees in the Santa Barbara area and one killed a man in northern San Mateo County when it crushed his house. Another man, the former publisher of the *Manteca Bulletin*, Darell Phillips, 62,

was feared dead after falling off a footbridge into a flooded creek in Calaveras County, 50 miles inland from San Francisco, and at least three lucky survivors were plucked from overflowing creeks in helicopter rescues.

After an exceptionally dry January, during which the El Niño threat appeared to have been exaggerated, the storm struck "like a bomb", victims said. It dumped up to 13in of

rain in places and whipped up 30ft waves off the coastal town of Pacifica. Swells up to 60ft high were reported from the treacherous Maverick's surfing spot at Half Moon Bay. Some 300,000 homes across the state were left without power and 500 acres of prime vineyards were under water as 14 counties declared emergencies — a precursor to seeking federal aid.

The storm was not as severe

as one that caused \$2 billion (£1.2 billion) in damage and left eight people dead in January last year, but it was the first that Californian meteorologists blamed squarely on El Niño, a periodic warming of the eastern Pacific that sends vastly increased volumes of moisture into the jet stream and has already disrupted weather patterns from Peru to Indonesia.

In Florida, dozens of light

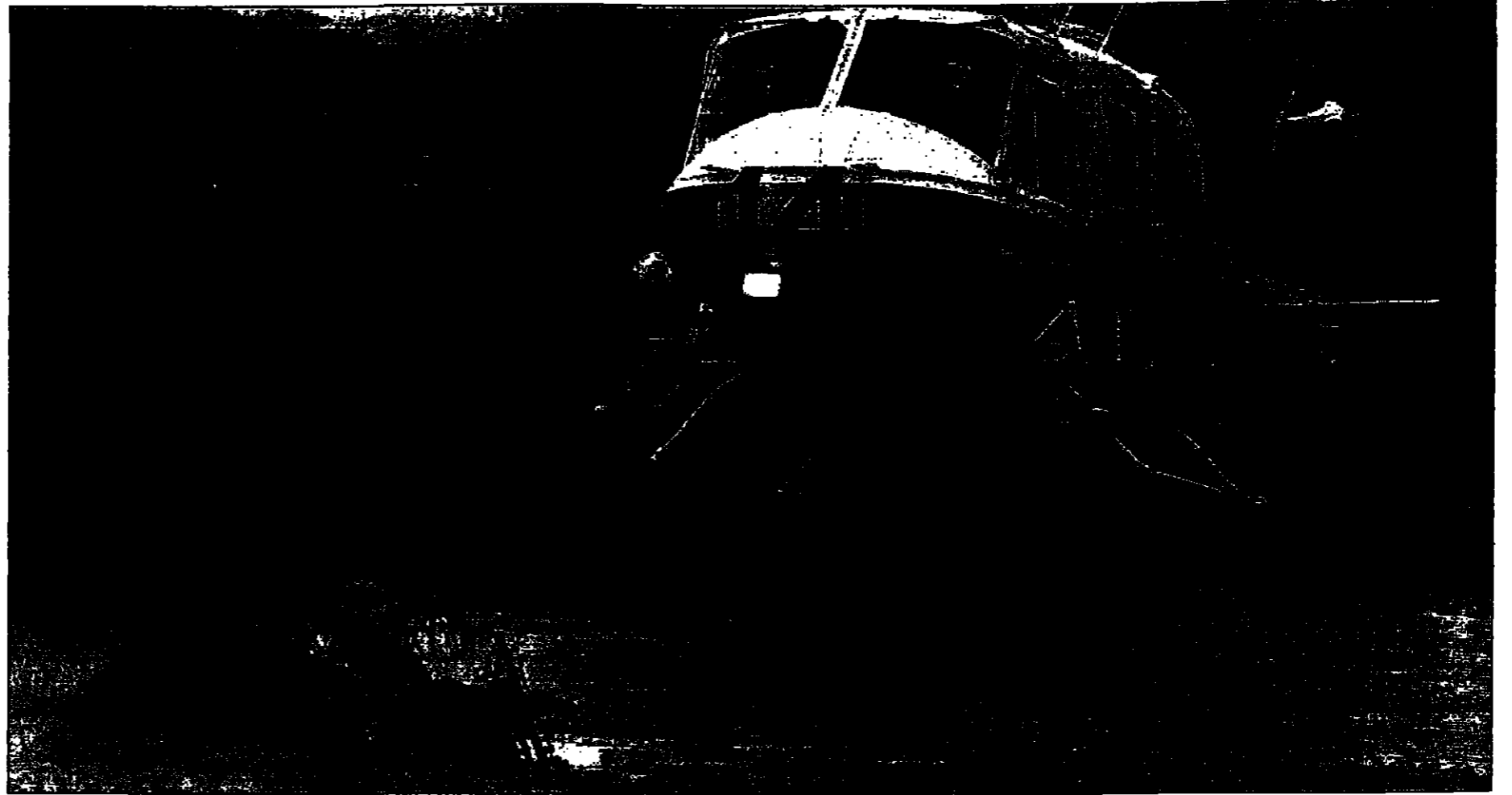
aircraft were wrecked when they were blown across a municipal airport by violent gusts. Two ships were driven aground and several people had to be rescued at sea as storms over the mainland cut off power to thousands of homes and brought heavy snow to the Appalachians.

Californians were scrambling to repair wind and flood damage during a break in the weather yesterday, as more

Pacific storms lined up off the coast, poised to strike in the next few days. Northern and central parts of the state are expected to take the brunt of El Niño, which in a matter of seconds became brutally real for one Marin County family whose house slid down a waterlogged hill. In all, 6,000 northern Californian homes were evacuated and their occupants moved to temporary shelters. Officials fear that

flooding, landslides and road blockages could increase drastically as successive storms strike areas that are already saturated.

In Los Angeles, two teenage girls escaped alive after daring each other to put a foot in a torrent near their San Fernando Valley homes. A firefighter pulled one from the water half a mile downstream. The other was rescued two miles away by helicopter.



A helicopter moves in to rescue Francisco Guevara, a farm worker who was left stranded on top of his tractor after flooding swelled a creek near Castaic in California

Bosnian intellectuals wash their hands of flag 'like soap powder box'



Deemed below standard: "uninspiring" new flag

FROM TOM WALKER IN SARAJEVO

SARAJEVO'S intellectuals yesterday sent an open letter of protest to Carlos Westendorp, the international High Representative, arguing that the new flag he has imposed on Bosnia is "the final way to kill" the nation.

Anxious that the Bosnian team should have a symbol for the opening ceremony of the winter Olympics on Saturday, Señor Westendorp has used his powers of arbitration and decided

that Bosnia should be united under an uninspiring mixture of blue and yellow, with white stars.

The intellectuals, led by Muhammad Filipovic, Professor of Logic at Sarajevo University, have demanded that Bosnians be allowed a referendum to decide their new flag. The old one, a shield with a sword dividing a group of fleurs-de-lys, is now judged unacceptable by Croat and Serb politicians, who identify it with the wartime Muslim regime.

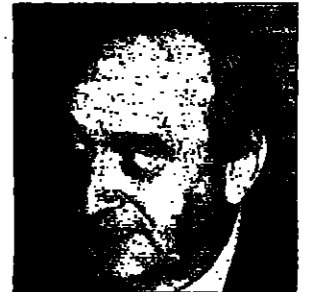
The flag imposed by Señor

Westendorp has been compared to a soap powder box. It has been chosen partly because, by its blandness, it cannot be associated with Serb, Croat or Muslim symbols. "The triangle represents Bosnia, the yellow is for hope or the sun, and the blue and the yellow combined signify the Council of Europe," said Duncan Bullivant, a spokesman for Señor Westendorp.

Bosnian historians are dismayed that modern political misconceptions have denied the country a flag and symbol that dated back to 1376, and

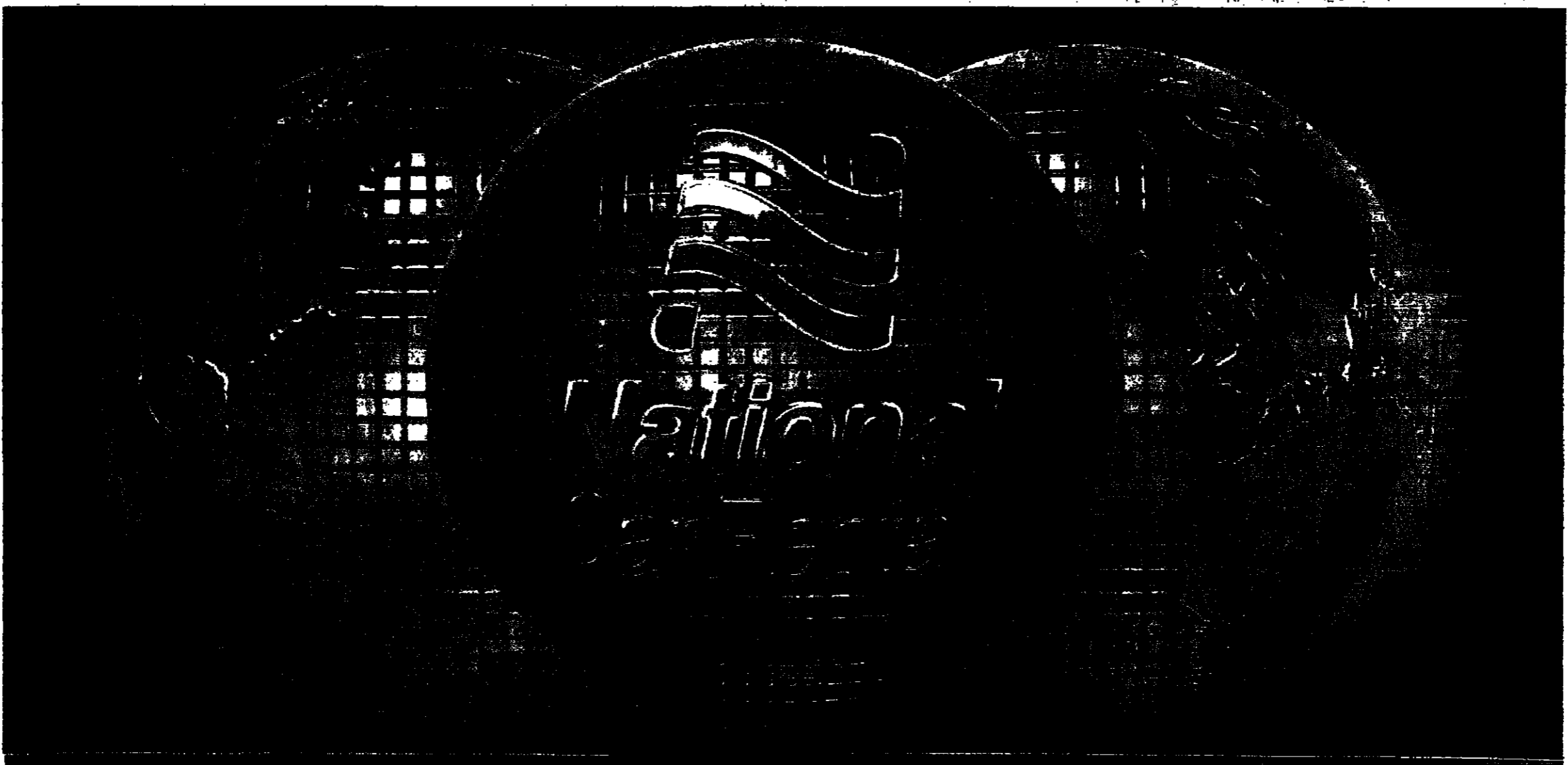
the reign of King Stephen Tvrtko. The Kotramanic dynasty from which he came was in turn Bogomil, Orthodox and Catholic, and the fleurs-de-lys and sword motif derived from a French coat of arms. Only in the last decade has the flag, especially the lily, had associations with Muslim rule.

Ironically, the Bosnian Serbs prefer to compete for Yugoslavia at the Games. The seven-strong team sent to Japan would have had little objection to the old flag, under which Bosnia has competed at winter Olympics.



Westendorp: arbiter

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Debate rages after Tucker execution

ROME TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS

DEATH, as in life, Karla Faye Tucker continues to divide Texans. A day after she was executed here by an injection of poison, arguments raged over the justice of her death, with passionate supporters of the death penalty squaring off against equally fervent abolitionists.

Tucker's last day was excruciating. Scheduled to die at 10pm local time on Tuesday, she still had reason to believe that she might win a reprieve from the US Supreme Court in Washington. She had reason to hope, as her lawyers said, that her final meal would not be her last.

That simple meal — a banana, a peach and a salad — was eaten at 4pm, while Justice Antonin Scalia, of the Supreme Court, was locked in consultation with his colleagues on the bench. Tucker's lawyers had peppered him with a series of appeals, ensuring that the execution would go right "to the wire".



Tucker: last words were calm and collected

With hindsight, it is clear that these appeals were no more than desperate legal flounders.

Her lawyers argued that execution should be stayed because Texas clemency law was unconstitutional; there was an "inference" she had been denied clemency because she was a woman; and she posed no danger to society, given her comprehensive re-

habilitation". The court rejected these appeals, the last at 6.05pm. Tucker, 38, had spent 14 years on death row, and had been locked for most of that time in one appeal after another.

Yet, even after the court's ruling, Tucker's supporters were praying for a miracle. Men and women dropped to their knees outside the Huntsville Death House, begging God to make George Bush Jr, the Governor, show mercy and grant her a one-off, 30-day reprieve.

He did not. At 6.09pm, at a press conference in Austin, an athen-faced Mr Bush said: "Like many touched by this case, I have sought guidance through prayer. I have concluded that judgments about the heart and soul of an individual on death row are best left to a higher authority."

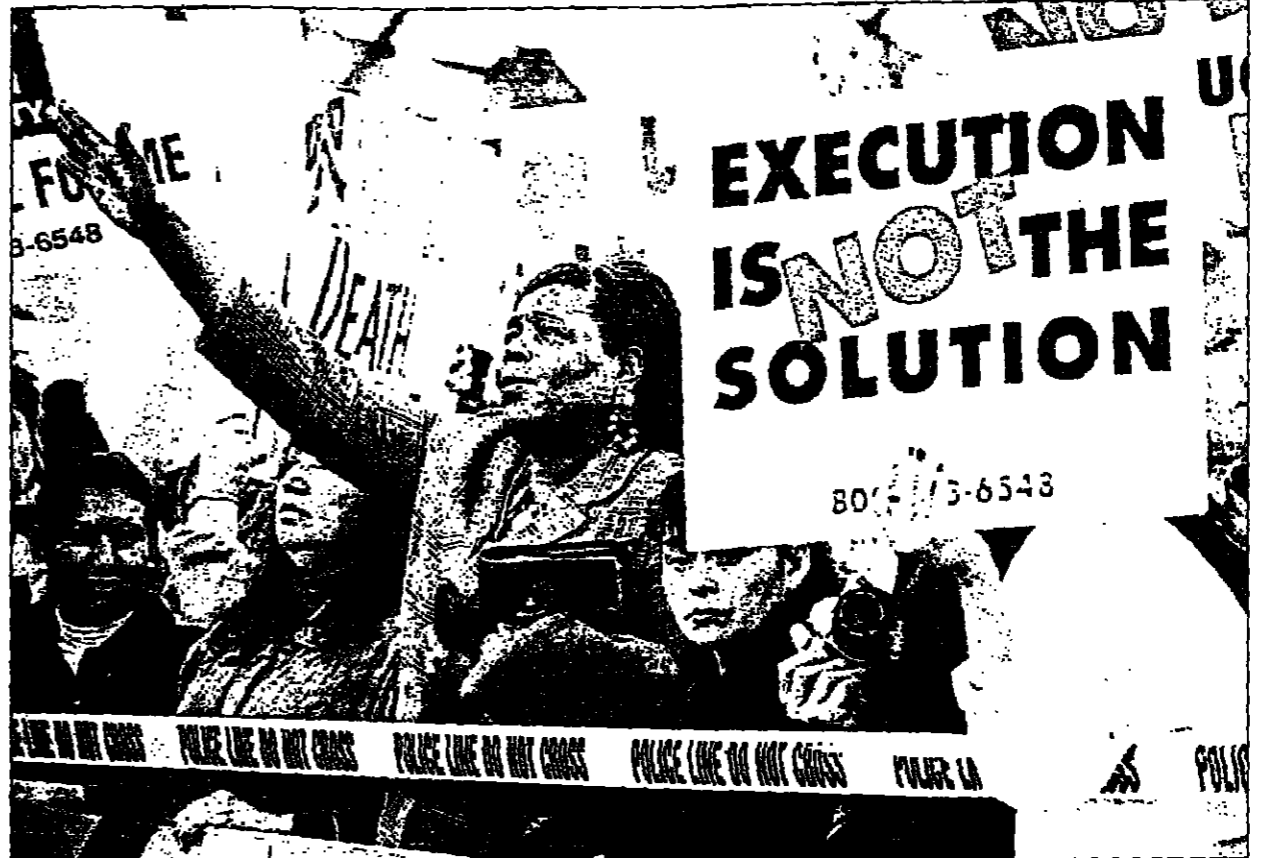
"The courts, including the US Supreme Court, have reviewed the legal issues in this case, and therefore I will not grant a 30-day stay. May God bless Karla Faye Tucker, and God bless her victims and

their families." As news of Mr Bush's decision reached the throng outside the Death House, whoops of joy went up from those who wanted Tucker to die. "Yes-haaa!" they yelled, men and women who had driven in their pick-up trucks from towns near and far.

The "justice and vengeance" contingent — at least by the volume of its expression — appeared to outnumber the pro-Tucker evangelical Christians and civil libertarians. The latter were now grimaced and many wept.

At 6.45pm, three quarters of an hour behind schedule, Tucker died, the first woman to be executed in Texas since 1963. Richard Thornton, husband of the woman Tucker killed, was one of the witnesses to her death. As the life ebbed from her, he said this, as if speaking to his dead wife: "Here she comes, baby doll. She's all yours... the world's a better place."

According to transcripts released yesterday by the Texas Department of Corrections,



Protesters plead for clemency outside the Death House in Huntsville, Texas, where Tucker was executed

Tucker's final words had been calm and collected. She said: "I would like to say to all of you, the Thornton family and Jerry Dean's family [the man she killed] that I am so sorry. I hope God will give you peace with this... I love you all very

much. I'm going to be face to face with Jesus now." Those present reported that she had smiled at the end, closed her eyes and mouthed a prayer. At 7pm the witnesses emerged, provoking a volley of cheers from the anti-Tucker

throng. Beside them, now separated by policemen, the pro-Tucker camp was struck by a ghostly silence. Brussels: The European Parliament has condemned the execution of Tucker and asked the US Congress to find

a venue outside Texas for a scheduled meeting. The Parliament's delegation for relations with America had been due to be received in Houston. (Reuters)

Tim Hames, page 20

Bonn in panic as unions take job protests to streets

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANS plan to take to the streets today in more than 200 cities and towns in protest at rising unemployment, edging towards five million. Bonn has drawn up an emergency job creation package, but union leaders said yesterday that it was unlikely to defuse public anger.

A jobless figure of about 4.8 million is expected to be announced today, a postwar record. Until now, Germany's workers have grumbled, but done little more than mount polite demonstrations. From today, said Uwe Kantelhardt, who is co-ordinating the protests, all that will change. "These unemployment figures will mobilise more people than ever before," he said. Some militants will try to occupy job centres, block motorways and blockade ministries.

Herr Kantelhardt, in his union offices in Bielefeld, emphasised that the protests would not erupt into violence. "We are not in France," he said. Nonetheless, there has been considerable consultation between French and German radicals. The mere mention of street violence has sent the Government into a panic. Police are on alert throughout the country, espe-

cially at job centres in the east. Local authorities are to be encouraged to create manual and clerical jobs for 100,000 people. Those raising job offers would have their benefits cut. The Government also plans subsidised training places for unqualified school-leavers and extra help in setting up small businesses.

The unions were quick to dismiss the programme of Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor. Ursula Engelen-Kefer, deputy chief of the trade union federation, said yesterday: "The local councils are in no financial position to take on these new responsibilities. They are already scrambling for cash."

Notably, the piecemeal measures mark a huge retreat from Herr Kohl's promise, only recently abandoned, to create two million new jobs by the end of the century. Norbert Blum, the Labour Minister, suddenly presented a detailed, favourable comparison of the unemployment crisis in France and Germany. His goal, plainly, was to demonstrate that Germany was still far better off than its neighbour, and so Germans had no cause to mimic the French in setting police cars on fire or throwing stones at ministries.

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Lewinsky joins her family to await immunity decision

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

WITH tears, hugs and popping flashbulbs, Monica Lewinsky was welcomed home by her father for a few days of respite from the White House scandal she has helped to precipitate.

The rainy reunion outside Bernard Lewinsky's home in Los Angeles late on Tuesday came after a circus-like flight from Washington. Accompanied by her lawyer and a bodyguard, Ms Lewinsky sat by the window in the front row of the first-class section of her flight to California.

Behind her, some 20 television cameras jostled in vain for a picture from economy class as the former White House trainee enjoyed a steak, an ice-cream sundae and some biscuits.

Whisked from the aircraft to a limousine, she emerged opposite her father's Brentwood house dressed in black and ran into his arms. Her stepmother, Barbara Lewinsky, joined the communal hug while her mother, Marcia

Lewis, presumably watched on television from 3,000 miles away. Ms Lewinsky is expected to stay in Los Angeles for a few days at most while Kenneth Starr, the special prosecutor, decides whether to offer her immunity in exchange for a full account of her alleged relationship with President Clinton.

Awaiting her return to Washington, Marcia Lewis, divorced ten years ago and described by *The Washington Post* as a "mother built for speed", was the first to hear of Monica's predicament after FBI agents approached her daughter and asked for her co-operation two weeks ago. "So she lied and tried to convince someone else to lie," she reportedly said then. "What's the big deal?"

A sleek and young-looking 49, Ms Lewis did not work when she was married to Mr Lewinsky but declared monthly household expenses of \$25,707 (£15,580) when divorcing him, according to court papers. She also said he called her

a "bitch" and a "moron" and "belittles the children and yells at them for no apparent reason". Dr Lewinsky, a respected cancer specialist, declared these claims ludicrous, but his divorce was acrimonious at best.

Since then Ms Lewis has written a tell-all book, *The Private Lives of the Three Tenors*, which sold 20,000 copies, thanks partly to rumours, only circulated by the author that she had had an affair with Plácido Domingo. She is now engaged to Peter Strauss, the 74-year-old owner of a string of radio stations in New York state.

William Ginsburg, Ms Lewinsky's lawyer, told reporters outside Dr Lewinsky's home that no deal had been worked out for her testimony before a grand jury convened by Mr Starr. "We are waiting for [Starr] to call us... We are not begging for immunity. We would like immunity. If he chooses to grant us immunity, that is fine," Mr Ginsburg said.



Monica Lewinsky, centre, arrives at the Los Angeles home of her father, Bernard Lewinsky, and stepmother Barbara

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TV queen plays to jurors in libel case

BY JAMES BONE

OPRAH WINFREY, the queen of talk TV, took her circus into a Texas courtroom yesterday to defend herself against libel claims by cattle ranchers angry over her comments on air about "mad cow" disease.

Ms Winfrey gave a typically feisty performance to the public gallery, often upstaging the lawyers cross-examining her. At one point on her first day of testimony on Tuesday, even the judge smiled.

The Texas ranchers sued Ms Winfrey after an April 1996 show on dangerous foods said "mad cow" disease, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), could infect US beef because of the practice, now banned, of feeding cow protein to cattle. During the ten-minute segment, a vegetarian gave a warning that an outbreak in America "could make Aids look like the common cold". With her usual hyperbole, Ms Winfrey told the audience that his statements had "just stopped me cold from eating another burger".

The cattlemen say the show caused beef prices to plummet, and are seeking \$10 million in damages under a Texas statute that bans defamatory statements about food products.

"I wasn't thinking about the beef industry," Ms Winfrey told jurors, as though they were a studio audience. "I was thinking about the consumers of beef. I speak for myself, and I've been successful for many years because I am concerned about the people. I don't go into a show thinking about corporations and people's money."

Democrat party cash raiser in FBI deal

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE troubles of President Clinton increased again yesterday after a key Democratic fundraiser surrendered to the FBI and the White House launched plans to deal with debts of as much as \$4 million (£2.4 million) for legal fees connected with Whitewater, the Paula Jones sexual harassment case and the allegations involving Monica Lewinsky.

After a comeback by the President last week in the wake of a fortnight of unremitting criticism over his alleged relationship with the former White House trainee, the White House was once more on the defensive as the campaign fundraising controversy of the Clinton-Gore re-election unexpectedly resurfaced.

Charles Yeh Lin Tzie, Mr Clinton's favourite restaurateur from Arkansas, who raised \$645,000 in irregular donations to the Democratic National Committee in 1996, came out of hiding in Macau on Tuesday night and returned to Washington under an agreement with the Justice Department.

It remained uncertain yesterday whether the deal, which avoided an embarrassing arrest abroad, required Mr Tzie to co-operate in the investigation into irregular contributions to the re-election effort.

On the debt question, the White House said that it was planning to set up a new fund, headed by Terry McAuliffe, the most accomplished Democratic fundraiser, with a goal of raising \$4 million to cover legal fees that have risen sharply since Ms Lewinsky's allegations.

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SUNDAY T

Cable-car crash stirs up anti-US storm in Italy

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ITALY was gripped by anti-Americanism yesterday as outrage and bitterness grew over the Dolomites disaster, when a low-flying American warplane from the US base at Aviano cut through an overhead cable-car wire, sending 20 people to their deaths.

Police said the victims — 11 men, eight women and a child — were German, Austrian, Polish, Belgian, Dutch and Italian. As inquiries by US and Italian authorities began, witnesses said the plane, a Grumman Prowler EA6B normally used for electronic surveillance flights over Bosnia, appeared to have deliberately flown under the 300m-high skier lift cables on Mount Cermis, above Cavalese, "in a kind of dare-devil game".

Some reports said the plane had been playing cat-and-mouse with another US aircraft while skimming just above the mountain slopes. Paolo Sartori, chief of police in Trento, 30 miles away, said it appeared the plane then flew under the 80mm-thick steel cable barely 300ft from the ground. Its tail struck the cable. He said pieces of the plane had been found near the spot where the cable car fell to the ground.

Members of Italy's centre-left ruling coalition demanded an urgent review of the "secret conditions" under which US and Nato bases have operated in Italy since the 1950s. They said the terms had never been debated by parliament or publicly disclosed. An emergency debate is to be held today.

Oliviero Diliberto, parliamentary leader of the hard-left Rifondazione Comunista party, on which Professor Romano Prodi's coalition depends in the lower house, said the US bases "not only violate our national sovereignty, they fail to respect the elementary rules of safety for our citizens".

An angry President Scalfaro said it "would be terrible to think such a tragedy was caused by someone playing a game with other people's lives". Signor Prodi, the Prime Minister, visited the scene of

the disaster with Benigno Zaccagnini, the Defence Minister, and Thomas Foglietta, the US Ambassador, who had been skiing in the resort earlier in the week.

Obviously distressed, Signor Prodi said tersely: "This was not a low-level flight — it was a terrible act, way outside regulations governing low flying." He said President Clinton, who expressed his sorrow in a phone call to the Italian leader, had assured him Italy would be "fully involved" in the US inquiry. Signor Prodi said the American pilot had "clearly violated the rules" and bore "a clear responsibility".

The pilot and his crew of three, who were on a training flight, were questioned yesterday at Aviano by Bruno Giardina, the Trento public prosecutor. They may face a US court martial.

Mauro Gilmozzi, Mayor of Cavalese, said it was "a dangerous, thoughtless and idiotic manoeuvre". The report had been subjected to low-level flights, American and Italian, for the past ten years. "This is not the first time planes have flown under the cables. They use our homes and ski slopes as a military adventure playground."

La Stampa condemned the "Rambos" who terrorised Italian rural populations, while *Il Messaggero* referred to "cowboys in the sky". But *Corriere della Sera* said anti-Americanism was misplaced, since many of the low-flying planes were Italian.



Sri Lankans keep Prince waiting

Christopher Thomas in Colombo watches a lengthy celebration of Sri Lankan independence as the Prince of Wales takes the opportunity to revise his local history

MILITARY parades, helicopters, fighter planes and an interminable cultural show ushered in Sri Lanka's 50th anniversary of independence yesterday, part of it watched by a hot and besotted Prince of Wales, who filled in the time reading a guide book about the island from cover to cover.

Guarded by three carloads of Sri Lankan commandos with sub-machineguns, he arrived on time — in violation of local custom — at the venue outside the parliament building, which sits in the middle of a lake. Frogmen were still searching for suspicious objects as he took up position and waited in the tropical heat in silent and rather lonely anticipation.

President Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, for whom a couple of hours' tardiness is quite customary, kept the Prince sweating for some time. She eventually made a spectacular entrance heralded

by bugles, her bullet-proof limousine escorted by a fleet of military motorcyclists in crisp uniforms.

The Prince soon learned about the time-consuming local custom of listening while a speech is delivered in English then repeated in Tamil and Sinhala, which can consume half a day. President Kumaratunga's 20-minute address thus took an hour, enabling the Prince to return to the guide book.

He did not stay for the cultural show, leaving instead for some private time after the President and her translators had addressed the nation. The Prince missed a long procession of floats depicting Sri Lanka's many successes since

independence, from power generation to water supply and telecommunications.

Representatives from about 15 countries listened as Mrs Kumaratunga spoke of her determination to defeat terrorism — a fact already well established now that the Government has declared the Tamil Tiger rebels a banned organisation, effectively shutting off any prospect of negotiation and focusing attention firmly on a military solution.

She was harsh about the nation's failures: "We have failed in the essential task of nation-building. We have meandered and faltered along the path, while our neighbours in Asia and many other countries have forged strong

and united nations in which peoples of race, religion and language live in harmony."

She added that Sri Lanka, which changed its name from Ceylon in 1972, had failed to realise the dreams of its freedom fighters at the time of independence. "The silent majority watched in horror while a great nation with an ancient civilisation... veered off into a terrifying era of ethnic, political and social violence. The people have now awakened to the call for peace and unity."

This was a rallying call for her faltering political proposals, in which Tamils were to have been granted substantial autonomy over the north and

east of the island. Opposition parties, however, have effectively killed the plan and, in a final bid to save it, she is considering an appeal to the people in a referendum.

There was a reminder of the war yesterday when the man who saved Ceylon from invasion by the Japanese turned up for the celebrations.

Leonard Birchall, 82, a retired Canadian air commodore, located the Japanese fleet near Ceylon in 1942, flying a long-range Catalina. Before being shot down and taken prisoner, he radioed the location to the British fleet in the area, enabling it to manoeuvre so that the Japanese ships retreated.

Thus ended an attempt to conquer Ceylon, which Churchill described as one of the most dangerous moments of the war. The young Leonard Birchall, deputy commander of his squadron, has since been one of the island's greatest heroes.

Spaniards win Rock siege payout

FROM GYLES TREMLETT IN MADRID

NEARLY 30 years after Spain's dictator, General Francisco Franco, closed the border with Gibraltar, the Supreme Court in Madrid has ruled that the state must pay compensation to Spaniards who suffered as a result.

A court order for recom-

pense to be made to the family of a businessman from La Línea, southern Spain, opens the way for payments of up to €1 million to Spaniards forced to abandon businesses in Gibraltar after the 1969 closure.

"Closing the frontier was a traumatic measure and meant those Spaniards with businesses in Gibraltar lost their livelihood overnight," a Span-

ish lawyer, Alvaro Marin, whose father had a business in Gibraltar, said.

Franco promised compensation but failed to pay up, and successive governments did not respond to demands to make amends. But the court said that Franco's border closure had infringed the individual rights of those Spaniards who lost their livelihoods.

Democrat party cash raiser in FBI deal

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Death rate falls despite fears over smear tests

The death rate in England from cervical cancer has fallen by 20 per cent over the past five years, and it seems fair to assume that the screening campaign to detect the disease, while it is still pre-malignant and eminently treatable, is responsible.



Dr Thomas Stuttford on cancer of the cervix, diabetes, flower allergies, backache and phantom pregnancies

This dramatic reduction in the death rate has been achieved by a progressively better standard of care. Most of the credit must go to the skills of the cytologists and cytopathologists who deal with the smears, but some is also due to doctors, who are now better at taking them. Credit for the campaign should be divided between the public health authorities and politicians.

The troubles that the Kent & Canterbury Hospital have experienced with its cytology service, which has led to women being falsely reassured while they were in fact harbouring a potentially lethal cancer, has caused alarm all over the country.

The problems arose in Kent & Canterbury because an efficient quality-control system was not maintained — and it is probably not the only unit where this has happened. But as the service becomes more disciplined, such problems will become less likely.

Professor Dulcie Coleman, the head of Cytopathology and Cytogenetics at St Mary's Hospital in West London, has written a full account in the journal *Pulse*, analysing what present-day medicine, when efficiently practised, can deliver in the way of a cytology service.

Screening is very effective at detecting pre-malignant changes in the cervix, but it is not foolproof.

In Britain smears are recommended every three years, offering 90 per cent protection; screening every five years offers 85 per cent protection. When I worked at the Royal London Hospital we did smears annually; this should give 93 per cent protection. No service can be 100 per

cent efficient. Human fallibility (which may be aggravated by such factors as tiredness), poor environment (noise, inadequate lighting) and outside anxieties eroding concentration can all affect the ability of the hospital technician, no matter how qualified and experienced, to pick out doubtful cells that merit a second opinion.

A computerised automated screening system, Papnet, is being introduced that will scan many thousands of cells, from which it will select the 128 most abnormal ones for a specialist opinion. This is likely to reduce the incidence of misdiagnosis.

Although the technicians, as cytotechnologists, are usually blamed for false negative results, doctors working in clinics may also be at fault. Smear tests are not quite as straightforward as one might think. The art of obtaining a good smear is to get the patient to relax, for then the cervix pops into view as soon

as the speculum is inserted. If a doctor is inexperienced, tense or diffident, the woman's muscles may tighten and a second-rate smear may be the result.

Cytologists are becoming much more particular about the quality of the smear they are expected to read. Nowadays, if given a poor specimen, they will usually return it to the clinic and the patient will be asked to reattend. Cytologists cannot be expected to detect abnormal cells if they were not, in the first instance, transferred from the woman's cervix to the slide sent to the laboratory.

Various risk factors predispose a woman to pre-malignant changes, and possible later malignant changes, in the cervix. Most — possibly all — pre-malignant cellular changes are related to previous infection with a virus. Two strains of genital wart virus in particular, HPV 16 and 18, are frequently implicated. The DNA from HPV 16 is found in 60 per cent of warts; from HPV 18, in 20 per cent. DNA from other wart viruses can be traced more rarely.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that these viruses are spread by sexual contact. The cervical changes are therefore related to the number of partners a woman has had, and the number of contacts her male friends have encountered. The earlier a woman starts to have sexual intercourse, the more likely she is to develop carcinoma of the cervix. It is possible that the immature cervix is very vulnerable to the wart virus, and a woman who starts having sex at an early stage has more time for more partners, and thus may be more at risk of developing cervical cancer.

Monogamous women with roving partners are at almost as much risk as those with many partners. Poor diet or smoking (including cannabis, some say) are also associated with cervical changes.



Pick of the bunch: daffodils contain calcium oxidate crystals, which penetrate the skin, causing a prickly rash

Blooms cause a rash of complaints

IT IS too early for a later-day Wordsworth to wander, lonely as a cloud, through Lakeside daffodils, but the barrows in London are already groaning beneath the weight of narcissi, hyacinths, primroses and tulips.

Many spring flowers cause interesting contact dermatitis — and their blooms produce different symptoms. The primrose family causes classic contact dermatitis, which is not much different from that caused by stroking a cat.

Contact with tulips results in a dry, cracked and thickened eczematous skin, particularly around the fingers. The allergic factor in tulips, anactone, is concentrated in the bulbs, but it is also found in the stems and petals.

DAFFODILS, narcissi and hyacinths can devastate the hands of pickers. This is due to the presence of calcium oxidate crystals, which penetrate the skin. The irritation from these is rather like that experienced by do-it-yourself experts who prefer to lay their own prickly glass-fibre insulation in the attic.

The hyacinth rash can be eased by washing with dilute acetic acid, which dissolves the crystals.

The rash caused by lilies — which can cover the face, hands and forearms — is raised and papular, and causes severe itching. The lily usually causes a rash only after heavy exposure, so it is more likely to affect flower-sellers than householders.

New remedy to relieve backache

BACKACHE is so common that its cost to the people who suffer from it, and to the state, is easily overlooked. One form of backache could never be overlooked — ankylosing spondylitis.

Truth of phantom pregnancy

AT FIRST sight there is little in common between Twinkle, the Parson Jack Russell terrier belonging to my host and hostess last weekend, and Mary, Queen of England, wife of Philip of Spain. Both, however, suffered from phantom pregnancies.

Diabetes drug gets green light

The drug Zestril lisinopril, an ACE inhibitor which is usually prescribed to treat high blood pressure, has been given a licence for the treatment of diabetic patients, even though they may not have high blood pressure.

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The image that cost a fortune

When her photograph was published around the world in May 1968, Caroline de Bendern's grandfather disinherited her. Interview by Ben Macintyre

There is one photograph that, more than any other, encapsulates the tumultuous events of May 1968 in France, when thousands of students and workers took to the streets in the most dramatic display of civil disorder seen in a Western democracy since the Second World War.



De Bendern: "I feel I have to live up to the image"

It shows a beautiful young woman, her eyes fixed defiantly on the far distance. The picture was, and remains, an icon of iconoclasm: the shouting demonstrators surge around her, Gauloises on lips, raised fists and Beatle haircuts; behind her rises a bourgeois apartment block, representing the stolid, old-fashioned values rejected by the young protesters; from her hand unfurls the flag of Vietnam, in condemnation of America's war.

The photograph, which was taken at the height of the *événements de mai*, appeared on the front page of magazines around the world. French observers compared it to another great French revolutionary tableau, "Liberty leading the People", by Eugène Delacroix. Here was a single image denoting sexual freedom, youth and a furious rejection of the old values and established hierarchy, echoing frustration and hope. Here was a national figurehead, the "Marianne of '68".

But the woman in the photograph was not French, a revolutionary, or even a student. She was a 28-year-old English aristocrat, born in Windsor, the product of an expensive public school education and the chosen heir of one of the wealthiest men in Europe. Her name was Caroline de Bendern. In the single click of a camera shutter she earned instant immortality in the pantheon of French heroines, and lost a fortune.

When the elderly, eccentric and exceptionally snobbish Count de Bendern saw a photograph of his granddaughter splashed across the world's press, an effigy of rebellion representing every value he despised, he threw a fit and cut her out of his will.

The events of May 1968 changed France's self-perception — the sudden, still mysterious upsurge of violent rebellion would eventually help to force the resignation of President de Gaulle — but few lives were altered as dramatically and permanently as that of Caroline de Bendern. This week, over coffee and shortbread in her home deep in the Normandy countryside, she looked back to the events of almost 30 years ago and insisted that she had no regrets.

"I think if I'd inherited a lot of money, I wouldn't have been able to live the same life. Money wasn't so important then. It alienates you in some ways," she says, her voice almost a whisper.

The enduring political power of her own picture is still a surprise, almost a burden. "I've become a symbol. I feel the responsibility, I feel I have to live up to the image."

"Others might have felt more comfortable in that role. By bizarre coincidence, the woman in the bottom left of the photograph, her face partly obscured by a raised fist, is the great-granddaughter of Emile Zola, the French novelist and celebrated polemicist.

"She contacted me and told me that her great-grandfather would have been only too delighted to see her taking part in a street demonstration," de Bendern says. However, reluctantly she may have taken up her unsolicited niche in French history, de Bendern's clash with her grandfather was itself the stuff of '68, a symbolic conflict between an older, established prewar world and an idealistic, emerging one.

Count Maurice Arnold de Bendern, formerly Baron de Forest, who died at the age of 89 just a few months after disinheriting his granddaughter, embodied the perfect antithesis to the spirit of May '68. An Eton-educated Viennese aristocrat ennobled by Emperor Franz Josef, heir to the Austrian-Jewish financier Baron Hirsch, he had been made a British citizen by Queen Victoria and went on to become Liberal MP for West Ham and a friend of Sir Winston Churchill.

He later left Britain ("In a huff, I think, when they tried to make him pay taxes," says his grand-daughter), and became a naturalised citizen of Lichtenstein, with a new title, Count de Bendern.

The count, who kept more than 150 cats at his Riviera villa, moved in a world of European aristocracy, of wealth, tradition and privilege that was several galaxies away from the mob-filled streets of Paris. He had singled out his pretty grand-daughter as the family's passport to royalty.

"He was a bit crazy actually, very tyrannical. He would hold people with his money. He had a soft voice, but he could be extremely cruel to people who were a bit weak," de Bendern recalls.

Caroline's mother was descended from the family of Alfred, Lord Douglas, Oscar Wilde's lover. The second marriage of her father, a former amateur British golf champion, to a commoner, had caused the count to disinherit him and devote his dynastic energies to his favourite grand-daughter.

Training up the young Caroline for a role in the European aristocracy, the count paid for her education at various convents and English boarding schools — from which she was repeatedly expelled, a fact that might have caused a less determined man to think twice about his plans.

"He wanted me to learn bridge, that was his obsession,

"I wasn't a communist or anarchist. I thought Che was good-looking, but it's not my thing to wave flags"

and to marry into European royalty in exile," she says. At 16, Caroline was dispatched by her grandfather to a Riviera lunch party, at which the guest of honour was the former King of Yugoslavia, under strict instructions to curtsy to, and catch the eye of, the unmarried monarch.

"I curtsied to everyone except the King. He was just sitting in the corner, about fortyish, very insignificant. He was very offended. I didn't do it on purpose," she laughs.

In her twenties, under the count's instructions, she was launched into Viennese high society. For her grandfather's benefit Caroline pretended to be attending the prescribed round of cocktail parties and balls, while secretly beginning to mix with Vienna's artists, musicians and writers.

She was eventually shopped by the Prince of Lichtenstein himself who, in reply to an inquiry from the count, reported that the young woman was never to be seen at any of the city's upper-class soirées.

As relations between the count and his heir grew stormier, Caroline headed to New York to begin a modelling career. "I hung around the Factory with Andy Warhol and Lou Reed. I got to know Otis Redding," she says. "She soon moved on to Paris, where she had spent part of her childhood. A certain bohemianism was already in the

family blood. "My father worked at the British Embassy. He was a friend of the ambassador, who got him a job that consisted of amusing the guests and telling funny stories and getting drunk, which was something he liked doing," she recalls.

Modelling, trying her hand at film acting, moving around the Parisian artistic community, she inhaled the heady whiff of revolution.

"It was a wonderful period. So many things were happening. *'Il est interdit d'interdire'*, I liked that slogan, anything was possible," she sighs.

Through May 1968, the tension escalated. The "night of the barricades" on May 10 saw fierce street fighting and savage repression by French riot police along the Left Bank, where de Bendern now lived. The young woman threw herself into the movement, but she was no radical. Her confusion, to this day, over precisely what May '68 was about perhaps reflects the movement itself, sprawling and unfocused, bringing together rebellious students and striking workers with Trotskyists, anarchists and Maoists, but fizzling out almost as quickly as it had ignited.

"I wasn't politically motivated. I opposed the Vietnam War, but I wasn't a communist or an anarchist. I thought

ing to him, the count "tried to get rid of most of his money" in his grand-daughter's name, including 450 acres of prime real estate in Paris, which was donated to build homes for the poor with the proviso, from the animal-loving count, that there should be no butchers' shops.

"I didn't really care," insists de Bendern, but then adds: "I thought he might change his mind."

He did not. Suddenly deprived of a vast inheritance, she set off on a strange Sixties odyssey: travelling to Africa, making films and records with her lover and later husband, the jazz saxophonist Barney Wilen. When that relationship ended, she moved in with another musician, the drummer Jacques Thollot.

Around the modest Normandy cottage, where she is now writing her memoirs, are arrayed the African carvings and jazz posters that bespeak a life utterly different from the bridge-playing aristocratic salons envisaged by her grandfather. On one wall hangs a vast poster with the photograph that changed everything.

"If I'd gone along with him, I'd have wasted my youth," she says. "We thought that things could change; of course, it was very Utopian."

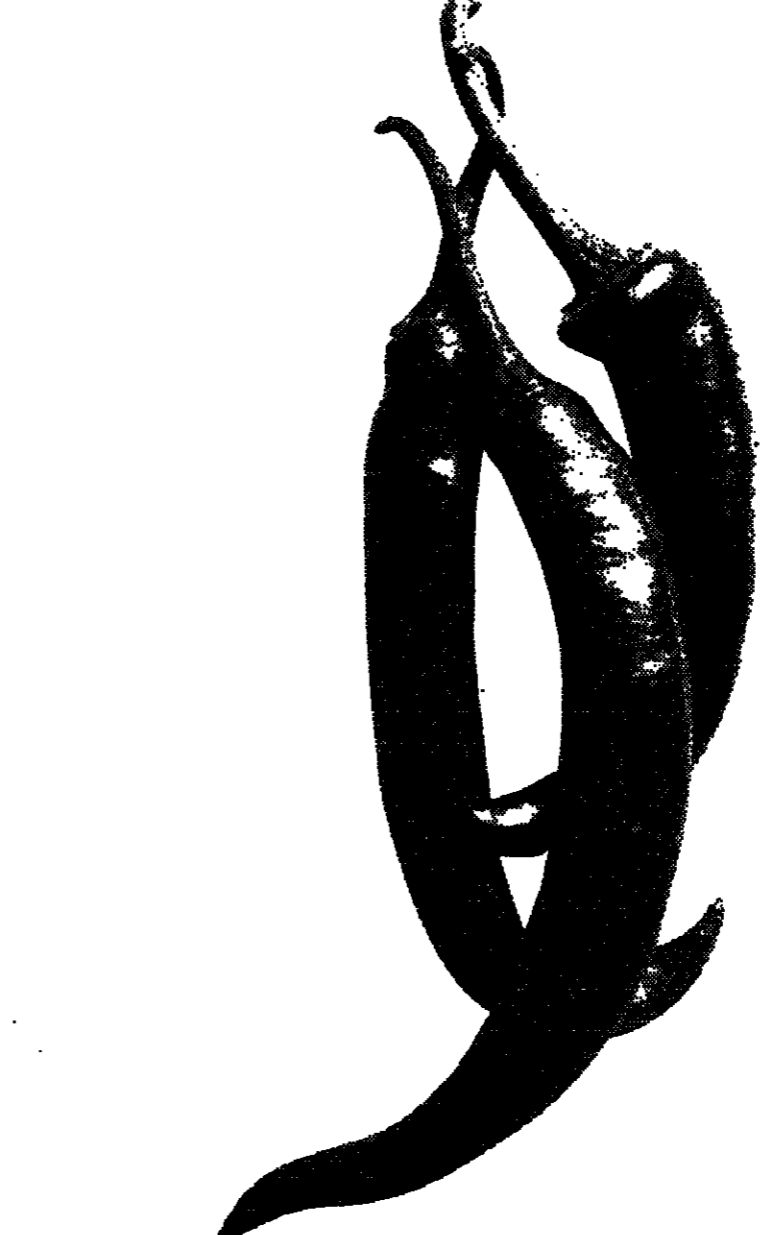
And what of the other young rebels from '68, who saw in her face the reflection of their anger and aspirations? "Some people have kept going, others became bourgeois and settled down," she says, turning again to the picture. "There were so many new ideas. I suppose it was a reaction to the war and never wanting that to happen again. It was a great movement towards other races, other civilisations, an opening of the horizons. Everybody wanted change in a different sort of way, I suppose."

Despite an adult lifetime in France and her status as a French icon, de Bendern remains resolutely English — so much so, in fact, that it is impossible to tell whether, after all, she would really rather not have caught the photographer's eye in 1968. "I knew the man who handed me the flag. He was an artist. He's very rich now. He inherited a lot of money," she giggles, as if the irony had only just struck her. "More shortbread!"



The Marianne of '68: Her face is synonymous with the May uprising, yet Caroline de Bendern was not French, a revolutionary or even a student

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The age of the senior citizen

Magnus Linklater on the Upper House, where experience is prized

Sitting in the House of Lords this week, watching the lights from the massive Victorian candle-stands glinting on the golden screen behind the woolsack, I realised that Age Concern had missed a trick. Instead of those advertisements in which a lady with ample charms demonstrates that age is no drawback in life, they should feature an elderly peer, with the slogan: "The first thing you notice about him is that he still has a job to do."

Their lordships' House, where the average age is 65 years and one month, is living proof that retirement is no barrier to useful activity. Here, age and experience are actually valued. It might be rude to describe it, as the late John Wells did in his recently published book, as "a day-centre for the unemployed", but he clearly identified a need. Men and women from varied backgrounds, who have led interesting and active lives, meet to exchange views about matters of the day. They conduct debates which are often well-informed, and just occasionally they take decisions which have an effect on government legislation. In a world where people are living longer and there is too much emphasis on youth, places like the Lords are invaluable. Far from being a waste of time, we should emulate it.

We should not abolish the Lords - we should enlarge it

This is not entirely frivolous. The debate I was listening to concerned the education of children with special needs. It was an important subject, and those addressing it knew what they were talking about. Experts such as Baroness Warnock, fathers like Lord Rix, doughty campaigners like Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, and - to declare an interest - maiden speakers like Baroness Linklater of Bute, (who does not, I hasten to say, form part of the geriatric faction) discussed the virtues and drawbacks of concepts such as integration and inclusion in response to the Government's Green Paper. Meanwhile the front bench "look careful note" of their comments. One knew, of course, that not a word would be reported next day, and that ministers, far from taking careful note, would be more likely to ignore it altogether. As Wells observed, after attending a celebrated debate on the Maastricht treaty, "it was when they were at their best that their theatrical dignity contrasted so cruelly with the lack of public attention".

That indifference, he said, "was unquestionable to do with their lack of real political power". Veteran MPs from the House of Commons tend to be scathing about the standards of Lords debates because they equate that lack of power with irrelevance. Some of their lordships' discussions do indeed descend into garrulousness or eccentricity. It is a largely self-regulated body, and age does not always equate with clarity or brevity. On the other hand, it rarely descends to the schoolboy level of the Commons at its worst. As to power - well, that

depends on how you define it. I doubt if many first-term Labour backbenchers, drilled by the Whips' Office and obediently voting the party line, feel any greater sense of power than a cross-bencher moving an important amendment to a government Bill in the Lords.

Constitutionally, of course, the power of the Lords is strictly limited, and with the threat of reform hanging over them, they are unlikely to test its limits under the current administration. That does not mean, however, that the House of Commons has a monopoly on ideas or sensible debate. Indeed the way some legislation is being waved through without any proper discussion would appear to hand the Lords back its traditional role of revising chamber.

Several clauses of the Scotland Bill, which went through the Commons last week, were approved by MPs without debate or a vote during the committee stage. There was much discussion about such arcane matters as whether a Scottish parliament should have facilities for simultaneous interpretation of Gaelic (I suspect we will be numbering the Gaelic speakers on the fingers of one hand), the role of the Prince of Wales in his capacity as Duke of Rothesay, and whether MEPs should be allowed to sit on Scottish committees considering European matters. But other, more important issues were passed without any debate at all. Clause 33, for instance, which gives the Secretary of State power to strike down legislation passed by the Scottish parliament, or 29, which gives legal effect to the powers reserved to Westminster, had no more than a few minutes of Commons time - an omission which Tam Dalyell, MP, described as "a constitutional outrage".

Government whips were quick to point out that there would be an opportunity to revisit these crucial matters at the report stage of the Bill, but it will be up to the Lords to subject them to line-by-line scrutiny, amending them if necessary and sending them back to the Commons. They know perfectly well that they will not be thanked for delaying the Bill unnecessarily, but it would be a dereliction of duty if they did not look closely at it and help to define as clearly as possible where the borderlines are to be drawn between Westminster and Edinburgh.

This is where the Lords should be at their best, acting, as Wells described it, as "a sheet anchor in stormy weather". The pace may be that much slower, the debate that much less acrimonious, and the age profile markedly higher than in "another place". But if the aim is to achieve fairness, clarity and precision in legislation that could decide the success or failure of a major piece of constitutional reform, then I cannot think of a better place to do it. And that is power of a kind.



Flying colours for Blair

The Prime Minister goes to Washington admired and courted, but still untested

Tony Blair has arrived in Washington in a position of unusual political strength for a British Prime Minister, similar to that of Margaret Thatcher during the Reagan years. For the moment, the usual order of things has been reversed and he can do more for Bill Clinton than the President can do for him. He represents the most supportive of America's allies over Iraq; his friendship is worth having when the President is just surviving another scandal. He also goes with an aura of success.

After nine months, the Labour Government is looking quite good, not only in terms of public popularity, but of administrative capacity as well. It inherited a strong economy, with high growth and falling unemployment. After nine months, the credit for economic success is being taken by the new Government; the old Government has never received as much credit as it deserved. Gordon Brown has proved to be a strong Chancellor; his tax increases have fallen too heavily on savings and future pensions, but that has not made him unpopular politically. He has kept tight control over public expenditure, inside the programme of the previous administration. That will open up his options later in the Parliament, either to increase expenditure or cut taxes.

The only negative, so far as the public is concerned, is the knowledge that Mr Brown has never forgiven Mr Blair for becoming leader of the Labour Party. Anyone can see that a falling out between the two men would be disastrous, both for the political standing of the Government and for economic policy. Mr Blair has to put up with the surly grumblings that have been heard from the Brown camp. Gordon Brown should rein in the suicidal friends who have talked up this ill-feeling to the press. So long as the tension between the two men does not lead to an actual breach, all will be well; they're indispensable to each other, their partnership is indispensable to their party.

Several other Cabinet ministers have been looking at least very competent. Partly because of the way he handled his family difficulty, Jack Straw's public reputation has risen most in the past few months. He is seen as a firm but reasonable Home Secretary; that is what the electorate, who regard crime as one of the central political issues, want to see. John Prescott may be a handful for

his civil servants, who find him incredibly talkative, but he is both the loyal leader of Labour and an old-fashioned character the public like and trust. He has also appeared decisive on transport issues. The two ministers with more than usually impossible tasks, David Blunkett and Frank Dobson, have done better than most people expected, even though Mr Brown has been so tough on public expenditure. Mr Dobson's decision to keep St Bartholomew's Hospital open as a specialist centre for cancer and cardiac cases had the personal support of the Prime Minister. Mr Dobson wisely remarked that he did not want a plaque on the wall of Bart's reading, "Founded by Rahere 1123, closed by Frank Dobson 1998". No doubt the underlying problems of health and education will come back to haunt the Government later, but both ministers have handled them more satisfactorily than their Tory predecessors.

A number of ministers have gone the other way. The foreign community regards Jack Cunningham as a disaster, even by the standards of Ministers of Agriculture. Peter Mandelson made a big contribution to Labour's election victory, but has not made any comparable contribution to Labour government. He is closely associated with the Millennium Dome, the one spectacular misjudgment that has been made over public expenditure. Harriet Harman is not nearly strong enough in the House to make the difficult case for welfare reform; if she did not have the backing of Mr Brown, she would hardly survive in the Cabinet. Robin Cook has made himself thoroughly unpopular by his treatment of women, sacking his wife at an hour's notice when about to go on holiday with her, and attacking Anne Bullen, his former diary secretary. As a Foreign Secretary he has not reached the level of easy competence that used to be shown by Douglas Hurd.

Leaving aside the merits of the constitutional changes, the Government has handled them with formidable dispatch, which has won respect for the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar. The inner core of the Cabinet, Tony Blair himself, Gordon Brown, John Prescott, Jack Straw, Lord Irvine, Donald Dewar, David Blunkett, George Robertson, Margaret Beckett, have settled down to a professional performance which belies their lack of previous experience in office. In terms of the traditional Tory values of sound administration, this is a business-like team. It is also, considering Labour's rhetoric, surprisingly middle-aged and male. This does not look like a new, radical or people's Government; it is a good grey Government with a light sprinkling of glamour. Clearly such a team is not a one-man band. Mr Blair is vital to it, but his team is perfectly capable of taking reasonable decisions without having to rely on his overriding judgment. Indeed his personal interventions have only about a 50-50 record; the Dome was wrong; Bart's is right. He is not as presidential as he sometimes appears.

His gift, which none of the rest of his Cabinet possesses, is one of relationships. He has an excellent relationship with Bill Clinton; even those of us who do not admire Bill Clinton see the importance of having a Prime Minister who can relate well with the President of the United States, as Churchill did with Roosevelt, Macmillan with Kennedy, Thatcher with Reagan, but Wilson did not with Johnson, nor Heath with Nixon. In Europe, the Prime Minister has a poor relationship with Lionel Jospin, who is an antediluvian socialist. He has a reasonably good working relationship with Helmut Kohl, and the European Commission staff praise his understanding of what they are trying to do. The big European decision is still to come: Mr Blair is much more cautious than Mr Brown about the single currency, and that is another cause of friction between them. His domestic rather than his

foreign appeal is the basis of his power. He is at his best in friendly company, particularly with a sympathetic audience of the young. William Hague gets under his skin in the Commons, and he can then make mistakes and sound petulant. But he is the author of the new relationship between Labour and the British people. Old Labour had lost its popular touch; even Neil Kinnock, who was a likeable man, could not overcome the public distaste for a socialist party. If he had lived, John Smith might have won the 1997 election, but he had not wholly dispelled suspicion of his party. Tony Blair removed it. Even those who still vote Conservative quite like a government of Labour men and Tory expenditure policies.

There are, of course, many difficulties ahead and many mistakes it would be easy to make. Despite the soundbites, the Government has so far made little progress with the reform of health or welfare, though perhaps some in education. One cannot know what will happen in Ireland. The Asian devaluations have already affected British exports and manufacturing employment; apart from the change in the statistics, unemployment may start to rise. Sleaze did not end with the Tories.

The introduction of proportional representation in Scotland, Wales, for the European elections and London could easily lead to its adoption for the Westminster Parliament; that would condemn Labour to perpetual coalition with the Liberal Democrats. Those Labour councillors who have experienced such coalitions in local government have mostly been scarred by the experience. Mr Blair is exceptionally right wing to lead the Labour Party - probably more right wing than Kenneth Clarke. It is easy to imagine circumstances in which he might be unable to carry his party with him. Old Labour supports him only because he gets them into office.

Nevertheless Tony Blair is the most strongly placed leader in any of the larger democracies. He will probably still be the head of government when his counterparts in the United States, Japan, Russia, Germany, France, Spain and Italy have all retired to their dachas. He may even outlast President Saddam Hussein. Yet there is a suspicion that, so far, he has not been fully tested by events.

William Rees-Mogg

Blair is vital to it, but his team is perfectly capable of taking reasonable decisions without having to rely on his overriding judgment. Indeed his personal interventions have only about a 50-50 record; the Dome was wrong; Bart's is right. He is not as presidential as he sometimes appears.

Life and death in the States

Tim Hames says executions hang on region and religion

Enormous international interest and much condemnation has been provoked by the execution of Karla Faye Tucker. It has attracted rather less attention in Texas. The principle of the death penalty and the lethal injection used are not controversial in the state. The only source of soul-searching has been over the sex and apparent spiritual awakening of Tucker. Without that, her death would scarcely have merited local comment.

The constitutional basis for such events is now barely a contentious matter in the United States. When the Supreme Court temporarily suspended state court executions through *Furman v Georgia* in 1972, it did so to prevent mandatory death sentences and arbitrary legal procedure. The court has never accepted that the death penalty is a "cruel and unusual punishment" in breach of the 8th Amendment. Every member of the present Supreme Court supports capital punishment. Tucker's final appeal was totally in vain.

That certainty is reflected in American politicians. Michael Dukakis' distaste for the death penalty was a major liability for him in the 1988 presidential contest. Four years later, to emphasise the contrast, Bill Clinton, the Arkansas Governor, rushed home during the Democratic primary campaign, to sign the death warrant of a mentally retarded murderer, George Bush Jr, the Texas Governor - who had the power to delay Tucker's fate, but to pardon her - was at least consistent in his decision not to intervene.

This latest death has added to the understandable impression here of an explosion of executions in the United States. In 1993, California resumed the death penalty after 25 years; during which the process, although still available, had not been used. New York has recently restored capital punishment. William Rehnquist, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, has publicly complained that other states have been unduly tardy in moving prisoners to their tombstones. In the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing, Congress passed legislation to speed up the process. Timothy McVeigh, the bomber, will probably become the first person to be executed by the federal government for 39 years.

This rush to execution is exaggerated. The numbers killed annually have not yet reached the levels seen in the 1960s before the Supreme Court defined stricter standards. Even on current trends it will take many years before it does. The distinctive feature about modern American executions is not the growing number but that they take place at all in an era in which virtually every other Western democracy has abolished the practice. It is a dubious honour that Americans share with Chinese Communists and few others.

It is not, though, that common. Although 38 states permit the death penalty, most do not use it or have executed only one or two exceptional sadistic murderers in recent decades. Actual capital punishment is concentrated in eight states: Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Utah and, especially, Florida, Georgia and Texas. With the exception of Utah, this set have three common aspects that largely explain their enthusiasm for execution.

The first is geography. All are southern states, bordering on each other. The second is politics. Their state judges are elected and therefore sensitive to popular support for capital punishment. The third is history. These states were in the forefront of executions, from at least the 19th century, until the Supreme Court intervened. Georgia was the state with the greatest propensity for capital punishment in the 18th century before the United States itself was formed and - despite contemporary controversies about a racial bias in the application of the death penalty - before mass slavery. Old habits, to use an awkward phrase, die hard.

History masks the importance of regional and religious culture. This is true, as David Hackett Fisher's masterful book *Albion's Seed* outlines, has been strongly influenced by original patterns of immigration from the British Isles. Northern states were mostly settled by religious dissenters - notably Puritans and Quakers - whose departure from Britain was often an involuntary search for tolerance. Southern settlers were more likely to be members of the rural Anglican gentry, drawn to the New World in pursuit of economic opportunity, and their indentured servants. The latter set, particularly the servants, developed their own form of evangelical protestantism.

These traditions evolved separate positions on capital punishment. Northern puritans did not believe Man had the right to play God. Southern evangelicals tended to rely on Old Testament teaching to argue the reverse. Utah's unique status is partly the result of its strong Mormon presence - a religion that takes the evangelical line on execution. These differences are still relevant to the American debate over the death penalty. They make the death of Tucker, a convert to the southern strand of Christianity, especially ironic.

JASPER GERARD

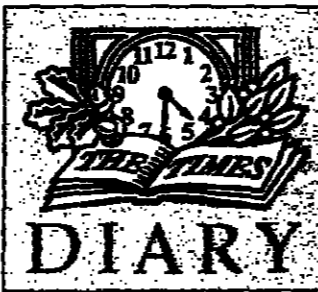
Cut price

HOW much would you spend on your children's haircut? Quite a lot, it would seem, if you are Cherie Blair. Just before the Blairs caught a Concorde to Washington, Andre Suard, a society crimp who accompanied Cherie to Denver amid much controversy, was summoned to Downing Street to cut the hair of Euan, 13, Nicholas, 11, and Kathryn, 9. Now Suard, who preens and snips at trendy Michaeljohn in Mayfair, doesn't warm his curling tongs for less than £50. A woman's cut is £69 - rather more than the £3 shearing the Diary favours at Waterloo Station. For among crimps, Suard is at the top of the beehive. Yesterday he and his young friends tended to the follicles of Lord Palumbo and Felicity Kendal. Suard has even snipped President Clinton and the late Diana, Princess of Wales. He has given Cherie ever shorter cuts for three years.



Just a snip: Suard, Kendal

I sent my tweeny, Katie, to the salon to see what the Blair babes have been enjoying. She returned to the Towers feeling pampered and found Suard most charming. She did, however, look a bit like a poodle. "The policeman at Downing Street are so unfriendly," Suard said of his trip. "No 11 is more like an office than a home, but the children are lovely. I always get a cheque on Cherie's personal account. She earns £220,000 a year as a top barrister. Why shouldn't she use a decent hairdresser?" As for the Blairs'



couldn't have done the same for us," mused Trend.

Tally Hoey

VAUXHALLS drab streets could soon reverberate to the rural cry "tally ho". The idea has been floated by the delightful Labour MP Kate Hoey to deal with an outbreak of foxes in her constituency. Frank Field's PPS has suggested that the solution is to invite round a pack of hounds and their red-coated carers. "Foxes are becoming a real problem," she says. "I'm not saying we should start a Vauxhall hunt, but they're going to have to do something." Are there no hunt-masters with a free afternoon who could ride to Kate's rescue?

● BAD timing. A bunch of Labour swanks, including Blair Babe

Claire Ward MP and Alan Michael, the Home Office minister, enjoyed a jolly bash in the Commons the other night to celebrate the good work of the Community Action Network. Its sponsor? GTEC.

Frock 'n' roll

LIKE all seasoned fashion folk, the dress designer, Stella McCartney, has decided to do something for charity. Along with 20 other British designers, she is to run up a frock for a fashion show in Mayfair next month on behalf of Action Against Breast Cancer, a disease from which her mother, Linda, suffers. One problem: Stella favours gloomy outfits - but this show requires dresses to use the charity's symbol, a pink ribbon. I wish it and Lady McCartney well.

In-flight video

D'YOU know what I mean? John Reid, Defence Minister, has been justifying the loan of two British army helicopters to Oasis for aeronaught displays in one of the Britpop group's promotions. "The music video provided a very prominent means of reaching a youthful audience and presenting the military as an exciting career choice," writes Reid in a letter to the Tory



Chopper topper: Oasis borrowed two MoD helicopters for video

Sir Teddy Taylor (not a fan of the band). "It also afforded our helicopter pilots a rare opportunity to practise flying in a built-up area. Wouldn't it please be cheaper, I wonder. Still, Noel and Liam Gallagher, the band's frontmen, paid more than £1,500 per hour to hire each helicopter but, as Sixties wannabes, promoting war could not be further from their thoughts. Or in the words of their last No 1 hit: "All around the world, you've got to spread the word. Tell them what you heard, We're gonna make a better day."

● LAST year's impressive attendance figures at the V&A - a million plus - appear a touch high. Lord Freyberg has learnt that the

figure includes those who visit when the museum is closed - for drinks parties and charity balls.

100 not out

THE City liverymen are to claim their first centenary: Major Norman Kirk, the former journalist and hero of two world wars, will be 100 on Tuesday. By way of a celebration, he is throwing a luncheon party at the Stationers' Hall. "About 100 people have accepted," he says from his London lair, the East India Club. "My family are flying in from all over the empire." Hats off to him.

سكنا من الاصل

STRATEGY

IMPERIAL

DUPLICATION



STRATEGY FOR SADDAM

Iraq's arsenal and its leadership can be removed

The diplomatic enterprise in the Gulf area has intensified: it may soon be irrelevant. Viktor Posvalyuk, the latest Russian envoy to appear on the scene, held talks yesterday with the Iraqi leadership. His visit spurred suggestions of another "compromise" proposal that would permit partial inspection of a limited number of presidential sites. But Madeleine Albright, the American Secretary of State, has now concluded her consultations. Robin Cook today makes a rapid tour of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, arrives in the region early next week, a presence that may signal a decisive shift in events.

No talk can alter the essence, that Saddam Hussein has spent seven years extending his arsenal of biological and chemical weapons. That process has continued, despite the enormous cost inflicted on his regime and Iraq's citizens. If his ambition was to have UN sanctions removed, he could have worked to achieve that aim. The only rational assumption is that this activity reflects a determination to use such weapons.

Iraq's nuclear ambitions appear to have been frustrated. This is because the components for such a programme have been relatively easy for UN inspectors to identify and eliminate. The same cannot be said for substances such as anthrax that once produced can be hidden or moved at will.

The chief disagreement among Iraq's opponents lies in the right response. Critics of Anglo-American intentions argue that if even intensive air assaults cannot eradicate Saddam's stock of biological and chemical weapons then the military option should be abandoned. The only outcome of an allied attack, it is contended, would be civilian casualties on an enormous scale that served to strengthen Saddam's status in Iraq. The most extreme view, expressed less than coherently by Boris Yeltsin yesterday, is that such strikes could be utterly counterproductive, starting a spark for a wider world war.

This case is superficially compelling but deeply flawed. It offers absolutely no alternative means of removing instruments of mass destruction from a man who has used chemical weapons in the past and is more than capable of deploying them again in the future. The alternative to intervention is the tacit acceptance that Saddam will accumulate more of this material. This would be the certain path to an enormous conflict in the future. That is why it is imperative that the allies act now.

Any intervention must be decisive. There is an emerging strategy that suggests it might be. The Americans have intimated that presidential "palaces" will not be their only targets. The United States may attempt to isolate Baghdad from the rest of Iraq through a massive attack on the communications network around that city. An effective air campaign would allow dissidents in the regions — Kurds and Marsh Arabs — to rise in rebellion. They would not be slaughtered as happened in 1991. The Iraqi Army, bottled up in Baghdad, would have its final opportunity to remove Saddam from office. American military pressure would be applied until they relented.

This strategy would mark a fundamental shift in allied thinking. It would recognise — albeit unofficially — that Saddam is the source of this enduring crisis and only his departure will end it. It would abandon the view that Saddam's survival is to be preferred to the potential dismemberment of Iraq. It would no longer allow the fear of Iran to restrict American policy. It offers the prospect of some peace and security based on alternative leadership in Baghdad. That possibility would do much to soften the opposition of Gulf states to another military operation. This is the only credible means by which the threat of biological and chemical attack can be removed from this region. Tony Blair should do all that he can to commend it to Bill Clinton in Washington this week.

IMPERIAL LAST POST

Model citizenship for the remnants of the British Empire

Robin Cook has proposed an overdue bargain to Britain's Dependent Territories, the 13 pinpoints around the globe that are the remnants of the British Empire. Setting out a partnership with the 180,000 people who have opted to remain British, he is offering to restore their British citizenship in return for tough new financial legislation to stop small Caribbean islands becoming havens for drug smugglers, money launderers and exploiters of lax regulation. The territories will, in turn, be given greater access to Whitehall, have a minister and a department looking after their interests and will be renamed British Overseas Territories.

The bargain is one of enormous importance to both sides. Removal of British citizenship and the right to live in Britain was an unprincipled measure, taken largely to stop Hong Kong Chinese coming to Britain. It has caused huge hardship for some remote territories, such as St Helena, whose people now have great difficulty finding work abroad or being able to travel freely. Restoring their right to come to Britain would be popular — but Mr Cook has recognised that there can be no discrimination. If they get their citizenship back, so too must the victims of the Montserrat volcano, Bermudians and others in the Caribbean. There must be no perception that the only British citizens overseas are those who are white.

Home Office stalling on the proposal is foolish. There is no question of large-scale immigration from the former colonies. The Falklands and Gibraltar already have citizenship. Of the 160,000 others, 60,000 live in Bermuda and would hardly swap their higher standard of living and balmy

climate for life in Britain. The rest have a moral claim on this country which sets no precedent for any other immigration issues.

Moral obligations work both ways, however. Several of the overseas territories in recent years have become notorious tax havens, offshore shelters and, more ominously, money-laundering centres. There is little the Government can do about legal offshore business — though clearly the Treasury would like to. But it is deeply concerned, as are the Americans, at those hiding the profits of crime in a Caribbean account. Mr Cook has insisted that by next year they must all put in place a proper package of financial regulation, one that meets EU and international standards. In the long run this will bring them more business than handling dirty money. In the short run it is vital if small governments are not to be bought wholesale by drug interests.

The key issue is regulation. Mr Cook is to stop irresponsible borrowing that could expose Britain to contingent liability. He wants independent financial regulatory bodies, funded by industry levies, in each territory. These must draw on the expertise of British lawyers, be fully accountable to the governors and have the confidence of banks, investors and the British Government. And they must insist that the territories cooperate with any overseas investigations.

Some territories will not like all this, just as they may resent the symbolic changes they are being asked to make in abolishing birching, hanging and laws against homosexuality. But a modern relationship means that as future British citizens, the overseas residents must live up to the standards demanded in this country.

THE DUPLEX AT POOH CORNER

Or why the MP should have kept quiet in New York

"What is a Dunwoody, Pooh?" squeaked Piglet nervously. "Is it the same as the 100 Aker Wood where we met?"

Pooh sat down on a large shelf marked MILNE, and tried to think this out. It sounded to him like a riddle, and he was never much good at riddles, being a Bear of Very Little Brain. Luckily Wise Owl was perched on the next shelf up, beside the post-feminist deconstructionists, with a noticeboard saying MILLETT KA.

So Owl cleared his throat importantly, whoooooo: "A Dunwoody is a Who not a What, Piglet. And she is a Very Important Person indeed, a Heffah/MP Important Person indeed, a Heffah/MP Important Person indeed. She is asking from the House of Commons. She is asking Chris Robin, who is now the Culture Secretary in her Government, to repatriate us."

"What is Repartycake?" asked Pooh hopefully. "Is it the same as Crustimoney Proseedcake?" He looked up at five minutes to clock, which had stopped at five minutes to eleven some weeks ago. "Nearly eleven o'clock," he said happily. "We're just in time for a little smackere of something from the deli delivery biker."

"But-but, we like it here," stammered Pooh. "It is much more comfy than in that drafty old wood, where our houses were always getting blown down or flooded out. This is a new-world residence of great charm, half way up the stack to the feminists. It is much grander than anybody else's, because it has both lifts and a moving staircase. And we get to eat not just wild honey, with all the bother of the buzzing back in our old home. But we also get buzz-free honey from all over the world, and maple syrup."

"And you mean such interesting people here," sniffed Piglet. "It is hard to be brave when you're only a Very Small Animal. But in New York there are animals of all sizes and shapes from all over the world. Back in England we were just little animals entirely surrounded by nanities and middle-class attitudes. In New York we have grown up."

"And there is more glitter in the shopping on Fifth Avenue," sighed Kanga. "They say that Oxford Street has become a tip, and that changing the guard at Buckingham Palace is a theme park." "New York is more fun for bouncing and Hudsonsticks," cried Tigger. "Well, it may never happen," groaned Eeyore. "When people like Winnie Dunwoody start gassing about heritage, I munch a thistle. We started life, like Toad of Toad Hall and all those other very English anthropomorphic animal tales, as tree and middle-class nursery fodder. But in our home in this great library we have graduated as citizens of the wide world."

Merger of drugs giants questioned

From Mr Steve Hayes

Sir, The discovery, development and marketing of new medicines contribute enormously to the UK economy; it is one of our few remaining world beating industries. The three largest British pharmaceutical companies, Glaxo Wellcome, SmithKline Beecham, and Zeneca, are all well managed and successful organisations.

With creative and visionary management thinking on mergers and acquisitions each is a potential platform for a world-class operation in the rapidly changing and consolidating global pharmaceutical environment. To so dramatically reduce the opportunities for scientific research, as the recently announced merger between Glaxo Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham will inevitably do (reports, February 2 and 3), will only serve to diminish the chances of discovering new drugs.

Pharmaceutical companies have always provided exceptional returns for their shareholders, perhaps even on an exaggerated scale, and this has perpetuated unrealistic expectations from the financial community. Rather than demanding cost savings from unnecessary rationalisations for their own short-term gain, financial institutions should take a longer-term view of the greater returns from the larger portfolio of new medicines that would be introduced if the researchers of these two organisations were left to compete.

As a shareholder and former employee of SmithKline Beecham, it strikes me that the motivation behind this move is simply the need for investment banks to derive fee income and kudos from ever larger deals, with little or no regard to the long-term health of the companies involved or the welfare of the many employees who are likely to lose their jobs.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN M. HAYES,
111 Burkett Close, Norwood Green,
Southall, Middlesex UB2 5NT.
steve.hayes@btinternet.com
February 3.

From the General Secretary of MSF

Sir, As the union for skilled and professional people, we have indeed approached Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade (report, "Shares take off as Glaxo's deal with SB fires market", February 3), but not "to block the merger". We are seeking an urgent meeting to outline our concerns over the threat to jobs and the UK science base.

This proposed merger could risk thousands of British science-based jobs and investment in research and development, and the case for the merger has not been made. We have, in addition, asked both companies for meetings on behalf of our members.

Yours sincerely,
ROGER LYONS,
General Secretary, MSF,
MSF Centre,
33-37 Moreland Street, EC1V 8BB,
February 3.

Pension provision

From the President of the National Council of Women of Great Britain

Sir, While the Government and the financial services sector no doubt welcome the results of recent reports indicating a boom in the personal pension market (report, "Thirtysomethings fuel pensions boom", January 21), our own current research into women's financial expectations and planning for later life paints a far less optimistic picture.

There would appear to be a huge gap between awareness of the pension issues and actual practical action: while most women express concern about what they will live on in their old age, a substantial number admit that they are not doing anything about it.

Despite the clearly declared view of those responding to a questionnaire which we sent out last year that women should take responsibility for their own financial future, very many expect to rely on a male partner or the State to provide for them. What disturbs us most is the opinion of the majority of women that, no matter how much they try to save, it will not be enough to provide for a secure old age.

Today's "thirtysomethings" may have woken up to the fact that they cannot bank on the State to see them through their retirement; but many women perceive themselves as powerless to provide a viable alternative.

Yours faithfully,
GRACE WEDEKIND,
President,
The National Council of Women GB,
36 Danbury Street, Islington, N1 8JU,
January 22.

Oat couture

From Mrs Ingrid O'Mahoney

Sir, If the thirtysomethings mentioned in Tina Gaudoin's article on "The power generation" (Features, February 2) are "sewing our proverbial oats", are they using needles in haystacks to do so?

Yours faithfully,
INGRID O'MAHONEY,
20 The Dale,
Wivenhoe, Essex CO7 9NL,
February 2.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Rifts and bridges in divided Ulster

From Mr Stephen Davis

Sir, Brigadier Ormerod (letter, January 30) calls for openness on both sides in the reckoning of Bloody Sunday versus IRA atrocities. Yet every IRA atrocity has indeed been followed by swift inquiry, with massive police and security resources, followed by criminal trials and lengthy sentences in a great many instances.

In January 1997 I attended the launch in Londonderry of Evesitt's *Bloody Sunday*. Don Mullan's book on the Bloody Sunday shootings, as a non-journalist Englishman, and witnessed the deep and widespread roots of the community's feelings. Having spoken at length to many in the Catholic communities in Northern Ireland over the last two years, I can echo Tony Blair's view that there can be no meaningful peace in the region unless the British Government demonstrably takes responsibility for its role in these tragic events leading article, January 30.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN DAVIS,
Bownham Grange,
Rodborough Common,
Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 5BU,
January 30.

From the Director of the Friends of the Union

Sir, As a Roman Catholic who knows and loves Northern Ireland, I greatly regretted the highly charged language used by Father Patrick McCafferty in his indictment of "Unionist terrorists" in Northern Ireland (letter, January 30). He comes perilously close to condemning a whole community and all its elected political leaders for the sins — which are indeed grievous — of a small number of loyalist murderers.

Emotive words like "pogrom" are completely misplaced: they imply a sustained viciousness on the part of Protestants as a whole which simply does not exist. My unionist friends, Catholic and Protestant alike, care deeply about the agony suffered by so many who have been murdered or driven from their homes in the border counties simply because of their loyal-

ty to their Queen and their country, but they do not suggest that a systematic pogrom is taking place.

Evil deeds must be condemned, but at the same time a clear distinction must be made between their perpetrators and those in whose cause they claim to be acting. The vast majority of responsible people in Northern Ireland are trying desperately hard to reconcile their strong beliefs on matters of fundamental principle with their yearning for peace. Sinn Fein should show that they are seriously engaged in this, the true peace process, by accepting that, wherever else may be agreed, successful political institutions must be rebuilt in Northern Ireland itself before David Trimble even considers talking to them.

Yours faithfully,
LJSL BIGGS-DAVISON,
Director, Friends of the Union,
PO Box 1261, London SW3 4JF,
February 2.

From Mr Robert Bear

Sir, Alas, I believe it is not in the power of politicians, let alone terrorists, to bring a peaceful solution in Northern Ireland. This power lies squarely with its ordinary citizens.

The deep divisions that exist among these citizens are all too readily endorsed, or perhaps even encouraged, by politicians and terrorists, whose very careers, after all, rest on them.

It is up to the people to initiate a genuine peace process by putting the Christian ideal that both sides proclaim above the divisive labels of Catholic and Protestant. Their children should not be conditioned to hostility and hatred, but encouraged to attend common schools.

Whether in a unified or divided Ireland, the two communities have to and can live together as one community. That is perhaps the real challenge they face in this beautiful and regrettably tragic country.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT BEAR,
3 Kensington Avenue,
Cheltenham GL50 2NQ,
February 2.

Church v State on power of courts

From Mr Philip Gore and others

Sir, In view of the Christian Churches' consistent and valiant support for human rights over many years it is paradoxical that the Human Rights Bill coming up for debate in the Lords on February 5 (letters, January 15, 27), puts them and other religious bodies at a disadvantage.

At the heart of the Bill is the requirement that public authorities must comply with the European Convention. But instead of just requiring the compliance of local and national government bodies, as would be expected, the Bill goes much wider. It defines a "public authority" as any "court or tribunal", or a body which performs "public functions". This secular courts will for the first time be given a role in judging moral, doctrinal and spiritual matters.

As matters now stand, a headteacher of a Church school who commits adultery, leaves his wife and cohabits with a colleague should not be entirely surprised if he was asked to leave. If the Human Rights Bill becomes law this same headteacher, when threatened with dismissal, will be able to argue that his right to privacy is being infringed under Article 8 of the European Convention, which will be used to put the school's governing body in the dock.

There are similar concerns about UK judges taking a wider view of convention rights and ruling on such matters as women bishops and the remarriage of divorcees and homosexual marriage. Even the ecclesiastical courts, which have never before been subject to civil jurisdiction, do not escape the clutches of the Bill.

Sorry, squire

From Mrs W. H. White

Sir, Without wishing to denigrate the chef, Rick Stein (leading article, "Pudding power", January 23), I would like to point out, as one of his tenants, that Padstow already has a perfectly good squire, whose position is not vacant.

Without Peter Pridoux-Brune and his forebears it is unlikely that Rick Stein would have been able to develop so fashionable and profitable a business in Padstow.

The family has done much to save the west coast of the River Camel estuary from the suburbanisation that has crept along the Rock to Polzeath side, and every bay and almost every headland on the road between Padstow and Newquay.

Pridoux Place is a centre for opera, chamber music, jazz concerts and other cultural activities, even if the family have not as yet been the subject of a television series.

Food is not the only, nor the most important, subject for culture.

Yours faithfully,
CAROLINE WHITE,
11 Church Street,
Padstow, Cornwall PL28 8BG,
January 28.

Face to face

From Mr David S. Cole

Sir, Transatlantic communication regularly brings to light new expressions. An e-mail I received recently from a colleague in the San Francisco office of my company contained the expression "face time". On asking, this turned out to mean a personal meeting between two people.

As voicemail, telecommuting and similar expressions seem to have been absorbed into English, I suppose this one will follow?

Yours sincerely,
DAVID COLE,
19 Broom Grove,
Knebworth,
Hertfordshire SG3 6BZ,
david_s_cole@compuserve.com
February 2.

Churches off course

From Mr John O'Byrne

Sir, The Church of England wants a course on how to run the Church using business principles (letters, January 29; February 4).

Should the course include prophetic warnings?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN O'BYRNE,
2 Mount Argus Court,
Harold's Cross, Dublin 6W,
o Byrne@forbairt.ie
February 4.

Numbers and tags for man and beast

From Mr Ben Garratt

Sir, Our village postmen know who I am, where I live and what I look like. Nevertheless, should there be any confusion, I have a unique postal address, the basis for which has existed satisfactorily for several centuries. This I, quite properly, append below.

My dwelling, a farm, has its own postcode, a telephone number, a fax number, an agricultural holding number and, because it is organic, a Soil Association number.

I have numbers on my birth certificate, passport, VAT registration, bank account, bank card, Visa, NHS card, "senior railcard" and driving licence.

My pedigree bull has a registered name and I can recognise him anywhere. However, in case of doubt, he has a herd book number and an indelible number tattooed on his ear.

He also has a cattle identification document number, and a cattle passport with its own number. By law he wears a metal eartag with the unique number K248-177, which has recently been updated to UKK0248-00177, and from the start of this year he should have a tag in both ears, each with the latter number, but with a small "crown" added.

All of these numbers are unique either to me or the bull (though I have to spend time looking them up whenever I need one).

Where can it all end? I suggest either with every citizen wearing double eartags, or (preferably) with the millennium bug. Roll on the year 2000.

Yours sincerely,
BEN GARRATT,
Burscombe Cliff Farm,
Egerton, Ashford, Kent,
February 4.

Joy of astronomy

From Dr David W. Hughes

Sir, I very much enjoyed reading your third letter, "Seeing stars", today. It is a superb summary of the joy of astronomy and I congratulate you on capturing the essence of my subject.

We stay here on Earth building the biggest and best telescopes that we can. These are then pointed to the skies and what comes down the tube is entirely in the lap of the gods. We cannot experiment, we cannot touch, all we can do is point and interpret. The joy is in pushing the instruments to the limit. And we know that we get things wrong from time to time and that progress is often made by going forward three steps and then retreating two.

But I wonder how often the phrase "launchpad of the golden age of astronomy" has been used. I can just imagine Copernicus using it when he put the Sun at the centre of his cosmos, and Galileo using it when he first turned a telescope to the skies, and Newton using it when he realised that the force of gravitation applied everywhere, and Hubble using it when he first looked through his 100-inch reflector and...

Yours sincerely,
DAVID W. HUGHES
(The Reader in Astronomy),
The University of Sheffield,
Department of Physics,
The Hicks Building,
Sheffield S3 7RH,
January 29.

Space technology

From Dr Nicholas Watkins

Sir, Anjana Ahuja (Mind and Matter, January 26) reports on the wider use of military technology, as described in the Channel 4 series, *Classic Plans*.

However, the global positioning system (GPS) to which she refers is at least ten years older (mid-1970s origin) and of far greater military importance than the Star Wars (strategic defence) initiative.

It is also much less to do with the (very taxing) task of shooting down incoming missiles, than with the perennial military need to know where moving ships, aircraft and soldiers are. This is one of many reasons why GPS has grown in importance while SDI has faded, at least for now, from the limelight.

Sincerely,
NICK WATKINS
(Space physicist),
Flat 3,
49 Alpha Road, Cambridge CB4 3DQ,
January 26.

Dishing it out

From Major A. C. A. Benda (ret'd)

Sir, My wife and I lunched in a hotel restaurant yesterday, and during the meal it seemed that every member of staff in the building found time to come up to us and say: "Enjoy your first/main/next course", and at frequent intervals: "Is everything all right?" All these were in addition to the requisite ration of "Have a nice day" and "There you go".

In the Army (of yore) one orderly officer could take care of 500 diners with the simple formula, "Any complaints?"

Yours truly,
ANTHONY BENDA,
The Old Vicarage, Crondall,
Nr Farnham, Surrey GU10 5SQ,
February 1.

OBITUARIES

NORMAN COLLINS

Norman Collins, soldier, engineer and industrialist, died on February 2, aged 100. He was born on April 16, 1897.

Recalling his terrible duties as a burial officer in November 1916, Norman Collins wrote: "I buried over a thousand men in shell holes, a lot of them of the Newfoundland Regiment, killed on July 1. There was a rat's nest in the cage of the chest of most of them, and the rats had already attacked our newly killed men of the 13th. Our men were collecting bodies of their own brothers and cousins and friends."

He was 19 years old, and this was an experience that haunted him to the end of his days. In old age he made a point of sharing the horror with young people he met, in the hope that he would so impress them with the folly and futility that any repetition would be prevented. Although Collins was an industrialist, it is as a soldier, first and foremost, that he would wish to be remembered.

Born into comfortable circumstances in Hartlepool, William Norman Collins spent much of his childhood shooting rabbits in the Hesseden Hills, the start of a lifelong passion for field sports. At 16 he was indentured as an apprentice with Sir William Gray and Co, shipbuilders and marine engineers in Hartlepool. He was to remain in engineering until 1961, but his military career came first. In 1914, aged 17, he attempted to enlist in the King's Own Scottish Borderers but was rejected as being under age.

Then on December 16, 1914, from the Hartlepool seafont, he witnessed the bombardment of the town by the 64 guns of three German battle cruisers. A battery of three six-inch naval guns returned fire from the Hough headland, killing 80 enemy, wounding more than 200 and severely damaging at least one of their ships. The townsfolk took cover but Norman Collins did not. Enthralled by the encounter he stood on the breakwater beneath the line of enemy fire as the shells crashed into the town killing 143 (21 of them civilians) and injuring 466.

In April 1915 he enlisted in the Seaforth Highlanders, and in August 1916, he was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant and sent to France. On November 13, 1916, at Beaumont Hamel on the Somme with the 6th Sea-



forth, he took part in the capture of "Y" Ravine under the umbrella of the creeping artillery barrage. By now he had been promoted to captain, the youngest at that time in the British Army.

In December 1916 he was wounded and was repatriated to a hospital in Brighton. The following April he was back with his regiment in Arras, but in June 1917 he was buried alive by an enemy shell. Fortunately, there were witnesses nearby who dug him out, and he spent the rest of the war in hospitals in Belgium and England. From the moment he was disinterred,

he vowed that he would treat every new day as a bonus, and this coloured his approach to life until its end.

After accepting a regular commission in the Indian Army with the 4th Rajputs in November 1918, he commanded a detachment of Pathans in the Waziristan campaign, covering several thousand miles of difficult terrain on horseback. But the serious injuries he had suffered in France caused him trouble in the hot climate of India and in 1921 he was sent back home in a troop ship with his coffin under his bunk. His soldiering days were over.

Back in Britain, he gained a place at Armstrong College, Durham University (now the University of Newcastle) to read engineering, which he followed with an apprenticeship with Austin Motors at Longbridge. From 1926 until 1939 he was general service manager of Stewart & Arden in London, and with the outbreak of the Second World War he transferred to the mechanisation department at the War Office, requisitioning automobile workshops all over the country to repair battle-damaged vehicles. The contacts he formed served him well when in 1944 he was released and joined the board of Frank Perkins, makers of small diesel engines.

He moved to Peterborough in 1945 and was soon running shops locally with military discipline. He continued to shoot with enthusiasm and skill until failing eyesight forced him to quit the field at the age of 66. His interest in wildlife led his helping to found the Wildfowl Trust with Sir Peter Scott.

At Frank Perkins, whose engines led the postwar market for commercial and agricultural vehicles, Collins was instrumental in the conception of the factory at Ecton in Peterborough, which is still the city's major employer. He was responsible for establishing satellite companies all over the world, but also knew the names of each employee and their family members.

Between 1963 and 1965 he also chaired the Collins Committee of Education and Training for the Motor Industry in Europe.

He devoted his long retirement to shooting, fishing and to the occasional foray into engineering to help an aspiring entrepreneur with a promising idea. But his first loyalty was to the Army, and he maintained close links with the Seaforth Highlanders Regimental Association. On his 92nd birthday he revisited the trenches in which he had fought in 1916, and was granted the Freedom of the City of Albert. It was an honour he cherished above all others. In his last years he participated in programmes about the Great War, the last of which will be broadcast on the 80th anniversary of the Armistice.

His goal was to be the final survivor of the battles of the Western Front of 1916, but it was not to be. He faded away with great dignity two months before his 101st birthday. He outlived his wife, Helen, whom he married in October 1940, by ten days. He is survived by a son and a daughter.

EDWIN WAINWRIGHT

Edwin Wainwright, BEM, Labour MP for Deane Valley, 1959-83, died on January 22 aged 89. He was born on August 12, 1908.



EDDIE WAINWRIGHTS whole life was based on coal from the moment he was born in the South Yorkshire coalfield within sight of Darnfield Main Colliery. This was where he worked for 26 years until the miners sent him to represent them in the House of Commons for another 24.

But besides coal, he was devoted to other things - to brass bands, to the Workers' Education Association and, above all, to moderation in politics and industrial relations. At a time when the Labour Party was moving sharply to the left, and Arthur Scargill was taking the National Union of Mineworkers in the same direction, Wainwright remained a dogged centrist. He was for Denis Healey when the Parliamentary Labour Party elected Michael Foot as leader, he was a pro-European when Labour was all for withdrawal, and he believed as a realist that it was better to find new job opportunities for displaced miners than to struggle to keep pits open when they were obviously doomed.

His beliefs did not help him when he wanted to stay for a final term in the Commons. He was planning to stand again in 1983 when the NUM brought in a rule requiring sponsored MPs, such as Wainwright, to retire at 65. It was widely thought that the main reason for this rule was not ageism but a desire to get rid of right-wing miners' MPs. Wainwright was healthy and able and backed by his constituency party. But in 1981, when the matter came to a head, he was 72. Knowing that he must lose against the Scargill-dominated union leadership, he decided to retire so that his constituency party could retain the NUM sponsorship and the union money.

Edwin Wainwright was educated at Darnfield Council School but, inevitably, he left school at 14 and, just as inevitably, he followed his father into the pits. All his life he regretted the curtailment of his education but he made up

for this by attending WEA lectures for more than 20 years and by regular classes at Wombwell and Barnsley Technical Colleges.

Wainwright worked at the coal face for most of his time as a miner, while above ground he was making steady progress in the union, the Labour Party and local government. He was elected to his union branch committee while in his early twenties and by the time he was 44 he was on the NUM national executive.

He also became a Wombwell Urban District councillor and in 1951 he became secretary-agent to the Deane Valley constituency party. The seat was held by Wilfred Paling, another miner, who was Attlee's first Minister of Pensions in 1945 and later became Postmaster-General.

When Paling retired in 1959, Wainwright was in place as his ready-made successor. In the House he spoke rarely and almost entirely on mining and regional matters

but his interventions were taken seriously because they were invariably reasonable and expertly informed. His best work was done on committees. He was a member of the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries, where during an inquiry into British Steel he used a mass of expert information passed to him by Sheffield steel workers.

He scored a notable victory in obtaining documents throwing light on the board's finances after overcoming opposition from Eric Varley, the Industry Secretary, and Sir Charles Villiers, British Steel's chairman.

He also served on the Select Committee on Energy and on his party's committees for trade unions, Yorkshire MPs and, of course, mining. Two years before he entered the House, he was awarded the British Empire Medal. He was married in 1938 to Dorothy Metcalfe, who survives him with their two sons and two daughters.

PROFESSOR HENRY BARCROFT

Professor Henry Barcroft, FRS, Emeritus Professor of Physiology at St Thomas' Hospital Medical School, died on January 11 aged 93. He was born on October 18, 1904.



HIS background and his childhood prepared Henry Barcroft well for a career in physiology. His famous father was Joseph Barcroft, who worked in the Physiological Laboratories at Cambridge with Michael Foster and J.N. Langley, two of the founders of the Physiological Society in Britain. After Langley's death in 1925, Joseph Barcroft succeeded him in the Chair at Cambridge. Henry's mother was Minnie Ball, a daughter of Sir Robert Ball, one-time Astronomer Royal of Ireland and subsequently Lowndean Professor of Astronomy and Geometry at Cambridge.

Henry, the elder of their two sons, recapitulated many of his father's successes. Both won open exhibitions to King's College, Cambridge, and graduated with double firsts in natural sciences, taking physiology as their special

subject. Both were awarded the Gedge Prize as postgraduate students. Both became professors of physiology and both were elected Fellows of the Royal Society. When Henry married in 1933, he did so in the same Cambridge-shire church as his parents, 30 years earlier, and the same

minister officiated. His wife, Bridget Mary (Biddy) Ramsey was the eldest daughter of A.S. Ramsey, President of Magdalene College, and a sister of Michael Ramsey, who went on to be Archbishop of Canterbury. After three years as a physiology lecturer at University

College London, Barcroft was introduced to the Dumville Chair of Physiology at Queen's University, Belfast in 1935. Though Queen's had the fourth largest medical school in the British Isles at the time, some features of the department he inherited were daunting. As the only permanent member of the academic staff, he had to give all the lectures. The department had little modern equipment, money, technical assistance or laboratory space.

Where most people would have seen insuperable difficulty, Barcroft saw opportunity. With his ability to stimulate enthusiasm in junior colleagues, he attracted many bright young men to join him in his research. He studied the peripheral circulation in man, using thermocouples and venous occlusion plethysmography to estimate blood flow. This work led to the first clear understanding of how blood vessels in human limbs are controlled by nerves.

In 1948, he was appointed to the chair of physiology at St Thomas' Hospital Medical School. The hospital had been

bombed, and its activities were still dispersed. Many staff who would normally have retired had stayed on to keep the hospital operational. As in Belfast, however, Barcroft was able to attract many enthusiastic research workers to maintain the impetus of his research. They studied how muscular exercise, hormones, lack of oxygen, nerves and so forth affect human blood vessels. Much of the work was published in a fine monograph with Jeremy Swan.

While at St Thomas', Barcroft received many honours, prizes and doctorates. After his retirement in 1971, he continued to work for the Wellcome Foundation and the Research Defence Society. In 1975, he gave the Bayliss Starling Memorial Lecture to the Physiological Society.

Henry Barcroft's success as a research scientist owed much to his background, his ability to break down complex phenomena so that they could be tested, and to a technical ingenuity that permitted inexpensive solutions to elaborate problems. Perhaps his most important characteristic, however, was his ability to inspire others with his own bubbling excitement and enthusiasm. Clever young people enjoyed working with him, just as an earlier generation had enjoyed working with his father.

In retirement he continued to live in North London and was pleased when friends called to keep him in touch with events. Though his mobility became limited after his wife's death in 1990, his mind retained much of its former acuity until it was clouded by a stroke in the final days of his life. His three sons and his daughter all survive him.

ROBERT RUBENS

Robert Rubens, novelist, died of cancer in London on January 14 aged 60. He was born in New Jersey on June 28, 1937.

THE Philadelphia milieu into which Robert Rubens was born was still recognisably that of Henry James and Edith Wharton. From an early age, his sights were set upon Europe, and the second half of his life saw a progressive severance from his roots.

The six novels he published between 1964 and 1990 dealt with the world of art galleries, publisher's parties and visits to country houses with the beautiful of both sexes. But they perhaps did not reveal his full stature. In his last years, in poor health and reduced circumstances, he embarked on an ambitious sequence of novels. *The Disinherited*, which uses the same material but more profoundly explores the author's American heritage.

Robert Gilbert Rubens was the younger son of a Philadelphia family. His father was a manufacturer, his mother the heiress to a considerable fortune. They gave their son a Quaker schooling at the Friends' Select School in Philadelphia, and he later attended Bard College, at Annandale-on-Hudson.

He arrived in London in the early 1960s as an exceptionally handsome, charming young man, with something slightly exotic about him, and, predictably, he set the town alight. The list of his friends

was an index to the fashionable and literary of the time: Doris Lessing, Muriel Spark, Rosamond Lehmann, Angus Wilson, Deborah Rogers, Francis King, and many others. He was for a period an assistant editor on the *Transatlantic Review*, but soon left to publish his first novel, *The Operator* (1964), an exceptionally assured and witty debut, which can be read as a *roman-a-clef*.

But Rubens was a person of greater substance than this

might suggest. Although mainly known by the superficial of his parties, and as something like the male equivalent of an *allumeeuse*, he was troubled by the world into which he had been introduced, and was already gathering the resources which would allow him to memorialise it.

In later years, besides publishing more novels, he became a distinctive and learned literary journalist, publishing in *The Spectator*, *The Tablet*

and *The Contemporary Review*. He lectured for the British Council and at Morley College. His Morley lecture on "Mandarin Writers", delivered by one who had talked with Elizabeth Bowen and Cyril Connolly, was a revelation in the very un-Mandarin 1990s.

Rubens's most successful novel was his second, *The Cosway Miniature* (1980), the light-hearted story of a series of country-house thefts, which was serialised on Radio 4. But perhaps his best published novel is *Arist Unknown* (1985), where the deeper undertones were explored in a story of self-realisation through the discovery of a surrogate brother.

Rubens was a man obsessed by the search for a vocation. He did not find it by working for Sotheby's book department in New York in the late 1960s, although he gained something from teaching in slum schools a little later in Philadelphia. In the 1970s and early 1980s his colourful parties resumed in London, but during a later period of uncertainty he tried to settle in Mallorca.

A visit to his native Philadelphia in the mid-1990s kindled the idea for the *romans fleuves* that was to be his life's work. Words poured from him. But the work was interrupted by the news, in July 1997, that he had pancreatic cancer. Undaunted, he continued, and was able to complete a substantial proportion, nearly five volumes, of his novel sequence. He never married.

PERSONAL COLUMN

WANTED, TICKETS FOR SALE, WINTER SPORTS, RENTALS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, COURT & SOCIAL, FLATSHARE, FLIGHTS DIRECTORY, LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES, FUNERAL OF THE QUEEN, ON THIS DAY, February 5, 1901

FUNERAL OF THE QUEEN. BURIAL AT FROGMORE. (FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.) WINDSOR, FEB. 4. The appearance of the Mausoleum was in keeping with the historic nature of the ceremony about to be conducted. The building is a cruciform edifice in the Romanesque style of architecture, surmounted by an octagonal lantern, and approached by a broad flight of granite steps.

NEWS

Blair ready to use force

Tony Blair told Boris Yeltsin that the West must be ready to use force against President Saddam Hussein as Britain disclosed details of Iraq's arsenal of biological weapons.

Prince to streamline charity work

The Prince of Wales is to streamline his key charitable interests to allow him to spend more time with his sons. The jumbled management structure at the Prince's Trust, founded more than 20 years ago to help disadvantaged youth find work, will be replaced by a single chain of command.

Pie in face for Gates

Microsoft boss Bill Gates became the latest victim of Belgium's "custard-pie gang" who have made a speciality of throwing pies at celebrities deemed guilty of self-importance.

New French test

The French magistrate investigating the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, has ordered a new test of the wrecked Mercedes used in a report that its airbags inflated before the final impact.

The censored press

Under new curbs on the press suggested by the Lord Chancellor, Robin Cook's affair with Gaynor Regan would not have been disclosed.

Vital Aids link

The discovery of the Aids virus in a blood sample taken in 1959 from a man in Central Africa makes it evident that the disease was established for decades in Africa.

Task for Saatchi

Advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi is to be appointed as co-ordinator for the German bid to beat England and host the 2006 World Cup.

Wrath of El Niño

The first big El Niño storm of the winter has blown into California bringing gale-force winds and torrential rain along a 500-mile front.

Anti-hunt setback

Anti-hunt campaigners were dealt a blow when the Government admitted that the backbench Bill designed to ban the sport was "flawed and unworkable".

Tucker debate

In death, as in life, Karla Faye Tucker continues to divide Texans, with arguments over the justice of her end.

Golfer fights club

British Airways pilot expelled from an exclusive golf club after he shouted "Cut the cheating Irish bastard" launched a High Court action to secure his reinstatement.

Home with family

Monica Lewinsky was welcomed home by her father for a few days of respite from the White House scandal she has helped to precipitate with tears, hugs and popping flashbulbs.

Singer is guilty

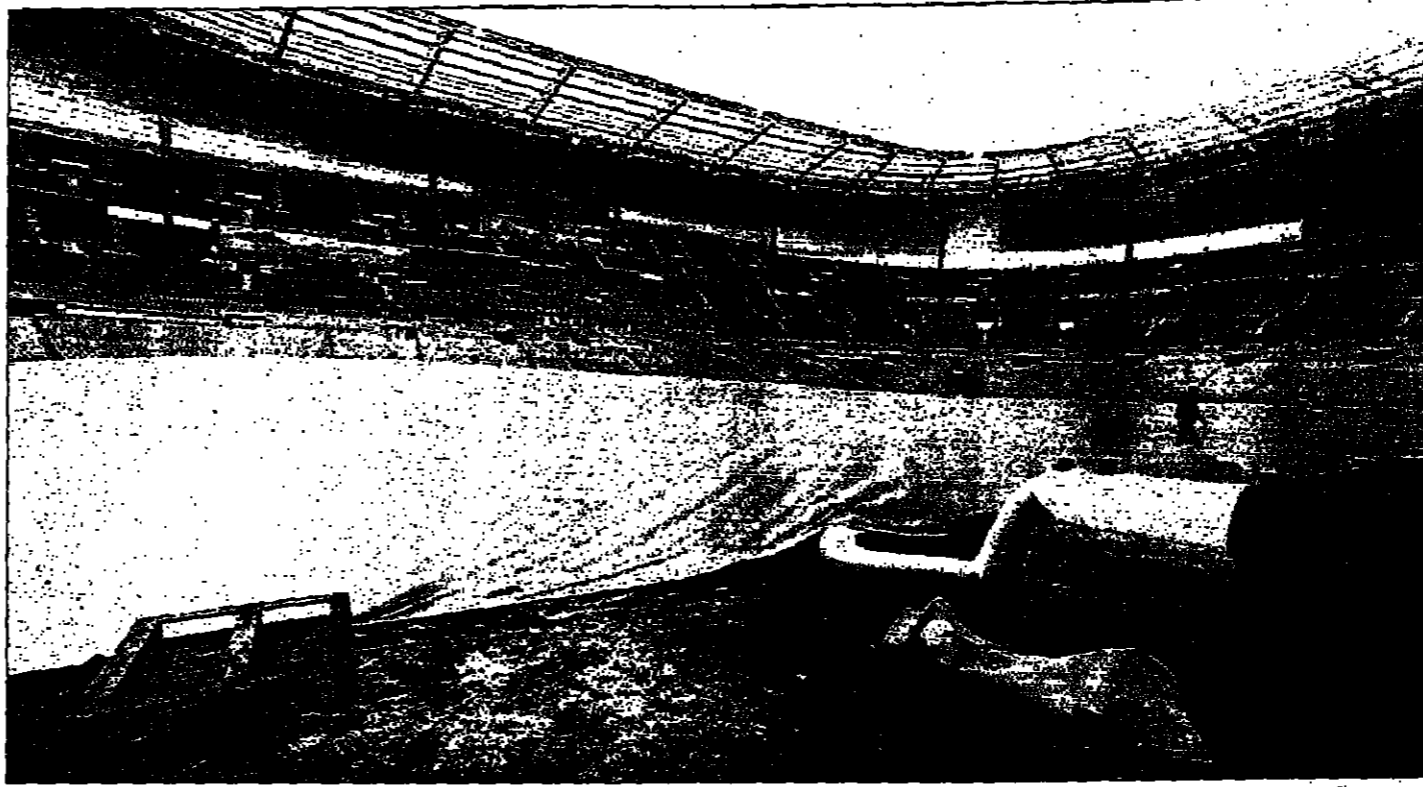
Brian Harvey, lead singer of E17 who caused outrage by claiming Ecstasy is a safe drug, was found guilty of causing an affray outside Siringfellow's nightclub.

Anti-US rage in Italy

A mood of anti-Americanism gripped Italy as outrage grew over Tuesday's disaster when "Rambos" piloting a US warplane cut through a ski lift cable.

Thief bitten by police dog gets £900

A self-confessed thief, with more than 50 previous convictions ranging from car theft to assault and burglary, was awarded £900 after being bitten by "Mad" Max, a police dog.



Hot air is blown onto the frost-covered pitch of the Stade de France in a desperate bid to get it ready for tomorrow's rugby match.

BUSINESS

Dalgely: The company is to sell its perfum and bread roll divisions for £835 million; its main business will be breeding pigs.

SPORT

Football: The Football Association will investigate Reading's FA Cup match against Cardiff after which 17 people were charged with public order offences.

ARTS

It's a blast: Geoff Brown on the week's new movies including Ang Lee's The Ice Storm, with Kevin Kline and Sigourney Weaver fooling around in Seventies America.

OPINION

Dr Thomas Stuttford: How a fall in the cervical cancer death rate has been achieved; good news for diabetics; the story behind a famous phantom pregnancy.

Granada: Gerry Robinson, the chairman, emerged bloodied but unbowed from the annual meeting after unprecedented shareholder opposition to the payment of £375,000 in compensation to directors for reduced service contracts.

Cricket: England's prospects of breaking West Indies' 21-year unbeaten record in Port of Spain may rest on winning the toss and bowling first.

Shocking storeys: Sir Norman Foster wants to build a huge block of flats on the Thames by Albert Bridge. Londoners should protest.

Secret history: The photograph of a young woman taken at the height of the May 68 French uprising was compared with Delacroix's great French revolutionary tableau: Liberty leading the People.

Silver: Prices surged to a nine-year high after Warren Buffett, the American billionaire, admitted he had bought 20 per cent of the world's supply.

Rugby union: France have made eight changes to their side for the opening Five Nations match against England, although there is only one new cap.

Without walls: Denmark's greatest living artist, Per Kirkeby, has renewed old controversies at the Tate Gallery with his four monumental brick walls.

Wandering free: Imogen Stubbs praises wandlust; Roger Scruton on blind freedom; Daniel Johnson enjoys Brecht; Elaine Feinstein visits the shtetl.

Markets: The FT-SE 100 fell 17 points to 5595.8. Sterling's index rose to 105.2 after a rise to \$1.0533 and to DM2.9900.

Racing: The Jockey Club lifted the bans imposed on Jamie Osborne, Dean Gallagher and Leighton Aspell after their arrests by police investigating allegations of doping and race-fixing.

Road show: Two stalwarts of British touring theatre have packed their motor caravan for the 35th time and set off on the road again for a new spring season.

Wandering free: Imogen Stubbs praises wandlust; Roger Scruton on blind freedom; Daniel Johnson enjoys Brecht; Elaine Feinstein visits the shtetl.

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THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,707

A crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-27 indicating the starting positions for the clues. The grid is partially filled with letters.

- ACROSS
1 Tribune one in PR agency organised (9).
6 Plant that is cut by doctor died (5).
9 One hoarding two grand in back tax (7).
10 Consider a description of what happened (7).
11 Eccentric with old hat seen about (5).
12 One who arranges or, alternatively, a singer (9).
13 Live English concerts initially associated with Henry Wood (5).
14 Problem choppers might have fixing old, old hatchet (9).
17 Withdraws claws (9).
18 Best? Yes and no (5).
19 A nasty striver - one pushing in? (9).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,706. A grid of letters corresponding to the crossword puzzle. The letters are: W, E, N, T, I, O, T, H, E, M, A, L, L, I, R, S, K, Y, N, O, S, T, A, R, A, D, U, L, T, I, C, K, T, E, N, N, O, I, N, H, C, H, A, R, I, S, M, A, U, P, I, N, E, E, L, E, M, E, N, T, A, B, L, E, B, O, D, I, E, D, T, E, S, T, A, N, R, E, S, A, B, E, D, M, A, I, N, S, T, R, O, M, S, Y, P, I, T, O, A, S, S, A, I, L, A, C, R, I, M, O, N, Y, H, P, A, S, O, S, P, E, K, E, R, A, N, T, Y, P, A, I, E, A, S, V, I, T, E, E, D, O, U, S, P, A, T, C, H, I, T, I, E, R.

AA INFORMATION

Table with columns for location, phone number, and service details for AA members.

World City Weather

Table showing weather forecasts for various world cities including London, New York, and Tokyo.

Hours of Darkness

Table showing sunrise and sunset times for various locations.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up 21.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.

Advertisement for 'Helpful' featuring a logo and text: 'If you're business or... Helpful to know that Crossair and Swissair between them offer 7 daily return flights London-Genova. Right? you'll find up-thing, no doubt.'

FORECAST

General: Mild everywhere. England and Wales will start rather cloudy, with a little rain or drizzle in the northwest and a few showers in the southwest, but most parts dry with some sunbursts. Much of Scotland will be grey with drizzle, and staccato rain in the north and northwest, but eastern parts clear with sunny spells. Northern Ireland will have a few showers, mainly in north and west, with brief sunny spells likely in east. The Irish Republic will be dry with sunny periods in east, but cloudy with rain in west.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions around Britain yesterday, including temperature, wind, and cloud cover for various locations.

ABROAD

Table showing weather forecasts for various international locations.



Changes to chart below from noon: high A remains slow-moving with little change. High B moves east and declines. Low D fills as low J deepens and moves northeast.

Table showing today's weather forecast for various locations, including temperature, wind, and cloud cover.

Advertisement for American Express travel insurance: 'Travel as many times as you like from £59.95 a year. With annual travel insurance arranged by American Express you can take an unlimited number of trips and save yourself a great deal. To enroll call, quoting reference TWA 02. 0800 700 737. No need to compromise.'

THE TIMES

INSIDE SECTION
2
TODAY



BUSINESS
Tony O'Reilly on the best corporate governance test
PAGE 29



TRAVEL
Las Vegas lights up anew to lure the tourists
PAGE 40



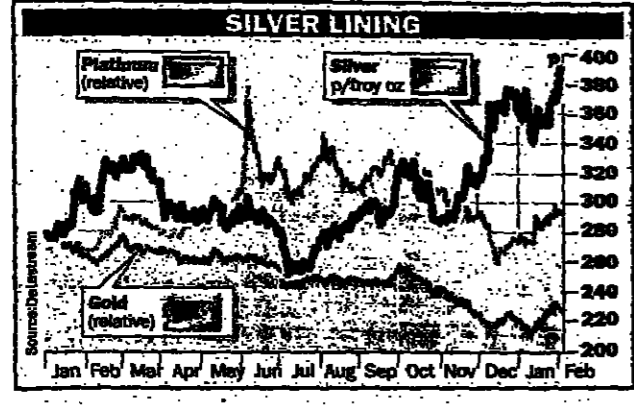
SPORT
England primed for restart in Port of Spain
PAGES 41-48

TELEVISION AND RADIO
PAGES 46, 47

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5 1998

Buffett pushes price of silver to nine-year high



FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK
SILVER prices surged to a nine-year high of \$7.075 an ounce yesterday after Warren Buffett, the US billionaire investor, admitted he had bought 20 per cent of the world's silver supply. Berkshire Hathaway, Mr Buffett's investment fund, has classified its \$900 million (£550 million) silver holdings as a "long-term buy". The move is not thought to be a rerun of attempts by Nelson Bunker Hunt and William Herbert Hunt, two brothers, to corner the silver market in the late 1970s. Mr Buffett made the disclosure in

response to persistent inquiries about Berkshire's silver holdings and said there were no further plans to buy or sell silver at the moment. Berkshire said: "Mr Buffett and Charlie Munger, vice-chairman of Berkshire, concluded that equilibrium between supply and demand was only likely to be established at a somewhat higher price." The Bank of England said it was keeping an eye on the silver market in London, where an ounce sold for \$7.075, up 22 per cent over the past ten days. Mr Buffett started buying silver at \$4 per ounce in July. The Buffett disclosure took the commodities market by surprise. Many

big players moving the market. Mr Buffett has never before held a significant silver stake. Last year he began to restructure his portfolio and sell a portion of his US stocks. It had been assumed that most of his new investments were in the bond market, where he went on a \$2 billion shopping spree. Tony Warwick-Ching, of Plentings Global Mining Group, said: "This announcement implies there will be a longer period of high prices. If he [Mr Buffett] sits on this investment it is going to be a very tight market for some time."

Commentary, page 27

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5995.58	(-17.01)
Yield	2.90%	
FTSE All share	2523.53	(-3.98)
Nikkei	16882.62	(-140.36)
New York	8113.02	(-47.33)
Dow Jones	285.02	(-2.33)
S&P Composite	1002.55	(-2.45)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5.75%	(5.75)
Long Bond	103.75%	(103.75)
Yield	5.88%	(5.87)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7.7%	(7.7%)
Life long gilt	122.75	(123.5)

STERLING

New York	1.6575*	(1.6450)
London	1.6528	(1.6425)
DM	1.6575	(1.6575)
FF	10.0130	(10.0130)
SFr	2.4097	(2.4167)
Yen	123.00	(123.30)
E Index	105.2	(105.1)

US DOLLAR

London	1.7991*	(1.8115)
DM	6.0285*	(6.0675)
SFr	1.4510*	(1.4640)
Yen	123.00*	(123.30)
S Index	105.0	(105.0)

Tokyo close Yen 125.35

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Apr)	\$15.35	(\$15.40)
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GOLD

London close	\$298.50	(\$297.15)
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* denotes midday trading price

Record vote fails to unseat Granada director

By Dominic Walsh

GERRY ROBINSON, chairman of Granada, emerged bloodied but unbowed from the annual meeting yesterday after unprecedented shareholder opposition to the payment of £375,000 in compensation to directors for reduced service contracts. Using John Ashworth, a member of the group's remuneration committee, as the focus for their discontent, 19 per cent of shareholders voting by proxy opposed his reelection, as a non-executive director, and 12 per cent abstained. He was still re-elected thanks to the support of 302 million shareholders, or 69 per cent of those who voted. Pirc, the corporate governance consultancy, hailed the result as "a warning shot that directors should not be compensated simply for doing the right thing". In the run-up to the annual meeting, the organisation had advised against Dr Ashworth's reelection as a protest at the committee's decision to compensate the board for cutting notice periods in the case of a takeover, from three years to two. Anne Simpson, joint managing director of Pirc, said: "Votes in favour of the re-appointment of directors are, on average, over 98 per cent in favour. For 30 per cent of shareholders to withhold their support for a remuneration committee member shows how seriously they view the issue of compensation payments and their concern that non-executive directors need to be taking a tougher line." The 700 shareholders who attended the AGM at Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, voted in favour of Dr Ashworth by a broadly similar margin to the proxies, but several voiced their discontent. One de-

scribed directors as "fat cats", while another accused Mr Robinson of treating shareholders "with a certain degree of contempt". But Mr Robinson defended the payments, pointing out that the three-year contracts had been offered to the directors at a time when the company's health was in stark contrast to its current health. He said: "One of the consequences of the kind of furore we've had over this issue is that you drive people to be dishonest. When contracts are changed there is always compensation. We could have called it a special bonus or the like, but we've handled it very honestly and straightforwardly and been pilloried for it." Mr Robinson, who received £138,000, went on to criticise the approach to corporate governance, attacking huge payoffs to sacked directors. "We do not pay for failure. But we reward people well when they perform well," he said. "Corporate governance is about more than just directors' salaries." Asked whether he would be taking a pay cut once he assumes the chairmanship of the Arts Council, he said: "When the remuneration committee meet next year, no doubt they will take account of my time spent working for the Arts Council. But I don't think this is a time issue. I know a lot of people who work all the hours and cook things up. Equally, I know a lot of people who work very little and cook things up." Speaking after the meeting, Mr Robinson admitted he had been surprised at the degree of opposition but was unrepentant over what he maintained was a matter of principle rather than money. Commentary, page 21



Gerry Robinson, pictured yesterday, said Granada had been pilloried for being straightforward

Dalgety £835m sale to trigger share buyback

By Fraser Nelson

KEN HANNA, the Scottish accountant who took the helm of Dalgety just four months ago, has agreed to dismantle the company with the sale of its main businesses for £835 million. The disposals, which stunned the City, are expected to trigger a £650 million share buyback and transform Dalgety, once one of Britain's biggest food manufacturers, into a pig-breeding and agricultural concern a quarter of its former size. Dalgety shares, which have been in steady decline for the last four years, jumped 49p to 343p yesterday - their sharpest ever one-day rise. Mr Hanna, who is likely to step down once the disposals are completed, said the company had originally planned to keep the petfood division, which includes the Arthur's and Winalot Prime brands, but changed its mind when offered £715 million by Nestlé. He said: "The petfood was such a good strategic fit to Nestlé that they were prepared to pay tomorrow's price

today. Our task was to return value to shareholders." He also confirmed that he would be considering his position. He said: "My job will not be done until the disposals are finalised. After that, I'm going to think about it." The Martin-Brower bread roll business, which supplies McDonald's restaurants, has been bought for £120 million cash by Reyes Holdings, a private US food company. In the last six months of last year, group pre-tax profits dropped to an expected £34.8 million (£43 million) taking earnings to 8.0p (9.3p) a share. The interim dividend drops to 6p (6.5p). Nestlé will now have 25 per cent of the European petfood market and will be able to compete head-on with rival Mars - which commands 40 per cent through its Whiskas and Pedigree Chum brands. Dalgety will comprise its PIC pig breeding arm with its cattle feed, fertiliser and seed division. Tempus, page 28

Vernons' doorstep army goes

THE 3,800-strong army of doorstep collectors used by Vernons Pools is to be disbanded as part of major restructuring that will also involve a further 200 job losses (Dominic Walsh writes). Vernons, which is part of Ladbrokes, blamed the continuing ravages of the National Lottery for the restructuring. Self-employed collectors have been the mainstay of Vernons since 1925. When the Lottery was launched in November 1994, Vernons employed more than 1,000 people. When the latest job cuts are implemented in May it will have just 150. The football pools market has declined by two-thirds since then and the industry has been urging the Government to cut the betting duty levy from 26.5 per cent to 17.5 per cent. Door-to-door collection of punters' money will stop on March 20.

Service sector growth adds to rate pressure

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

STRONG growth in service industries in January provided an uncomfortable backdrop to the two-day interest rate meeting of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee that began yesterday. Most City economists expect the MPC to leave base rates unchanged at 7.25 per cent today preferring to wait for more evidence, particularly on retail sales and wage negotiations, to see whether the economy is cooling off. However, this week's discussion is likely to have been made even more difficult by the latest survey from The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply that showed service sectors grew at a quicker pace in January. Its business activity index rose to its highest level since August last year. The survey showed that employment rose strongly in January and at an accelerating rate. It further reported that increased demand for suitable staff led to a rise in wages and salaries. Against this, firms' input costs fell to their lowest level since October, 1996, reflecting the strength of the pound. David Hillier, economist at Barclays Capital, is one of the few City economists who expect a rate rise today. He said that an increase was not essential, because the economy is expected to slow sharply this year. But he said that a rise was still needed "to send a clear message to employers and employees at a vital time in the pay settlement round that earnings growth will not be allowed to threaten the inflation target".

Reuters analyses its US problems

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor



Job eased fears

REUTERS HOLDINGS, the information group, yesterday admitted that an investigation in America was looking into whether data from the rival Bloomberg was improperly incorporated in Reuter products and whether any "reverse engineering" of Bloomberg systems had occurred. It was the first detailed statement by the UK-based group since news broke last week that a grand jury investigation is under way into allegations of improper use of information

owned by Bloomberg involving Reuters Analytics, a US subsidiary. The subsidiary specialises in Reuters financial information products and databases. It is not part of the Reuters management structure in North America. Until 1996, it reported to David Ure, the main board member responsible for Reuters' marketing strategy. Since then, it has reported to John Parcell, the main board director responsible for financial information products in London. Yesterday's statement, designed to clarify the scope of the continuing investigation,

was cleared by the US Attorney's office involved. Reuters, of which Peter Job is managing director, admitted that, apart from Reuters Analytics and some of its staff, the investigation "will also involve an examination of the activities of other individuals and entities outside Reuters Analytics". Reuters seems not to know just how widely the inquiry might eventually range. Reuters said that it believed that the inquiry was focused primarily on an arrangement between Reuters Analytics and an unnamed New York consultant who subscribed to

the Bloomberg service and associated data and analytics. The investigation is looking at whether the consultant was induced to breach his subscription agreement with Bloomberg "by arranging for the consultant to provide Bloomberg information to Reuters". The Reuters statement eased some of the more extreme City fears by saying there was no sign that the inquiry was looking at allegations that attempts had been made to break into the main Bloomberg computer to extract proprietary code. Reuters shares rose 40p to 560p.

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Relationship Manager

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Unsuitable case for Pirc treatment

COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

John Ashworth, the chairman of the British Library Board, seems an unlikely character to be cast as the *bête noire* of the corporate governance police. Nonetheless, yesterday he found himself in that role and a punishing experience it was. In all their fury over his behaviour as a member of the Granada Remuneration Committee, the self-appointed guardians of boardroom correctness ensured that 19 per cent of shareholders voted against his election.

Mr Ashworth can take some comfort in the fact that, after abstentions, 69 per cent of votes were cast in favour of his reappointment. Those who wanted to use the ballot to demonstrate their distaste for Granada's plans for compensating directors for shortening their contracts will try to portray yesterday as a victory. They have probably never stood for election, for if they had they would know that a 19 per cent negative vote would generally be deemed an overwhelming victory. That is not the case in corporate elections, where shareholders are generally happy to back their boards — the unhappy ones simply sell the shares. But the Granada vote came after vigorous lobbying by corporate stirrers Pirc and the normally more sensible ABI. If between them they could win only fewer than a fifth of the votes, they can hardly claim success.

Gerry Robinson is a stubborn man. Once he had gone public with the plan for paying directors, including himself, for reducing their notice periods, he was not going to back-track. As he reasoned yesterday: "The real question about corporate governance is do we, (the directors), actually deliver, are we a successful company?"

With earnings per share which have progressed from 15.9p to 50.6p after five years of his nurturing, shareholders cannot but concur with the view that Granada has delivered. They reward Robinson and his fellow directors well for their labours and it seems unnecessary quibbling to protest over what are, by comparison, small payments for depriving directors of what they had once been given.

Yesterday's protesters should not be focusing their attentions on a company such as Granada, where the profits are rolling in and there is no oneness or slight of hand about the rewards meted out to those who generate them. Why do they not raise their voices, and their voting cards, at those businesses where management incompetence earns fortunes at shareholders' expense?

When Anne Iverson left Laura

Ashley, the business was in total disarray and she was £1 million to the good. Shareholders may care to make their views on that clear to chairman John Thornton. Similarly, Sears chairman Sir Bob Reid generously paid off former chief executive Liam Strong after a disastrous reign which had been prolonged only by Reid's support. Would Pirc and the ABI kindly make their views known on that episode.

There are plenty of deserving cases for shareholder action but Granada is not on the list.

Docklands centre a site for sore eyes

Down in Docklands, a long-cherished project at last seems likely to take shape: there are the first signs of action on a site which is destined to be turned into a new exhibition centre for London. Earls Court and Olympia have

their own quaint attractions and owner Lord Sterling of Plaistow will eloquently expand upon those, but not every exhibition organiser shares his enthusiasm. The need for a modern centre to cater for a rapidly expanding industry has been depriving the capital of much lucrative business in recent years. Various schemes have been mooted but come to naught, generally fundering on the difficulties of matching the need for long term finance with the relatively short-term committed income.

The London Docklands Development Corporation, equipped with a perfect site, thought it had cracked the problem when it found keen overseas backers. Talks reached an advance stage until these wealthy foreigners hit a little local difficulty. They are Malaysian. The turmoil in the markets there caused a hiccup in plans but has not choked them completely. The LDDC has learnt tenacity during its time

transforming Docklands from barren sites into a thriving combination of business and residential communities. The Malaysian crisis merely meant that the terms of the deal had to be restructured, and, although sceptics still hint that the money could prove a problem, the proponents of the scheme believe that they have now got it nailed.

Country Heights Holdings, a Malaysian company which developed the Kuala Lumpur exhibition centre, is putting up £40 million of equity and guaranteeing a similar sum. The LDDC, soon to be succeeded by English Partnerships, is throwing in the land, 85 acres on the north side of Royal Victoria Dock which may not have had much value a decade ago but which, helped by the Jubilee Line, would attract plenty of developers today.

The tricky part has now been handed over to Barclays Capital, which needs to raise about £160 million of debt to finance the

grand plan. This looks like more than a pipe dream since some leading exhibition organisers have, apparently, been prepared to commit themselves to using the new centre once it is built. The projected timescale of having the first show in the year 2000 sounds optimistic, but the Docklands story has been one of dreams turned to reality.

Warren Buffett's silver lining

When Warren Buffett buys, he buys big. His decision to invest in silver means that he has now stuffed his vaults with a fifth of the world's annual supply. The temptation is to rush to the conclusion that Buffett, the sage of Omaha, has turned bearish on the equity market.

But hold fast before rushing to swap shares for a few trinkets. Mr Buffett has backed his hunch on silver with a whopping 2 per cent of his entire investment portfolio. He has already been well rewarded for his judgment in buying the metal, with the price having been cheerfully moving upwards, with his encouragement, since he started

buying. Yet 2 per cent hardly amounts to a vote of no confidence in equities.

The wily Buffett knows the value of a portfolio spread, and last year he squirreled a similar amount of his fortune away into bonds. But he still has most of his assets in the equity markets and performances continue to justify his faith in shares.

Buffett talked about long-term value investing before Tony Dye at PDFM started investing his pocket money, let alone other people's pensions. He prospered by picking the right stocks and staying with them, on the assumption that well-run businesses would withstand the vagaries of stock markets. He has not yet abandoned that philosophy.

In silver, he has spotted real value: a commodity whose price has been allowed to drift too low. He can afford to add a chunk to his portfolio.

Hanna from heaven

AS Ken Hanna yesterday collected the unadulterated praise of the City for his efforts at Dalgety, his chairman must have been relieved that one of his proteges has come right so speedily. Sir Denis propelled Hanna into the hot seat, and demonstrated his faith in the appointment by bolstering his Dalgety shareholding. Being chairman of both Dalgety and Rank now looks rather less uncomfortable.

Valuation surplus boosts Capital Shopping Centres

By CARL MORTISHED

CAPITAL Shopping Centres, owner of Lakeside and the MetroCentre, received a £278 million top-up from its three largest malls, helping to raise the valuation of its portfolio by 20 per cent, to £1.9 billion, last year.

However, Donald Gordon, chairman, said that rapidly rising rents and a dramatic improvement in yields were a rare combination for the industry. He said: "I would question whether these phenomenal rates of growth over the past two years are sustainable at their current level in the medium term."

CSC produced a valuation surplus of £116 million, help-

ing to raise its net asset value per share by 27 per cent, to 391½p. The shares rose by 4½p, to 444p, yesterday.

CSC said that strong demand from retailers for strategic locations had helped it to achieve strong rental growth and had underpinned a rise in rental values. More than half of the valuation uplift was attributable to a rise in rental values, and the remainder was attributable to a half-point fall in yields.

Douglas Leslie, CSC's managing director, said that 81 per cent of CSC's tenants pay rents that include a share in the turnover of their shops. Turnover rents accounted for up to

7 per cent of CSC's £150 million turnover.

CSC's pre-tax profit for the year rose by a third, to £77.4 million, and earnings per share rose by 30 per cent, to 15.3p. The full-year dividend rises by 12 per cent, to 9.25p.

The company's Lakeside centre, in Essex, gained £134 million in value over the past year to reach £756 million, and the MetroCentre, at Gateshead, was valued at £509 million, up £91 million.

CSC's portfolio uplift did not include a revaluation of the 600,000 sq ft Braehead centre under development in Glasgow and now more than 80 per cent let. The total cost of the project is booked by company at £285 million, but analysts' estimates of the completed value suggest a £100 million surplus.

CSC's gearing was only 19 per cent at the year end, but Mr Leslie said that Braehead and planned extensions to Lakeside and MetroCentre would cost the group some £400 million. The company has submitted a planning application to increase Lakeside's retail floorpace by 125,000 sq ft, including a 17-screen multiplex cinema and a multi-storey car park.

At the MetroCentre, the property group has secured the local authority's approval to develop a new Debenhams department store and 27 new shop units, but the scheme has been referred to the Department of the Environment.

Times, page 28



John Abel, left, CSC's property director, Douglas Leslie and Peter Badcock, finance director, viewing a model of its Braehead shopping centre

Summers claims Asia is now stable

By ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

LAWRENCE SUMMERS, the US Deputy Treasurer, yesterday claimed that financial stability had been restored to Asia for the time being despite another day of losses on the region's stock markets.

Mr Summers, speaking before the Senate Finance Committee, admitted the crisis would have a "real" impact on the US economy and warned that further instability posed "grave" risks.

He added that it was vital the US Congress voted new funds for the International Monetary Fund to help head off any future problems. A Clinton administration plan to provide the IMF with \$18 billion (£10.9 billion) is stalled

in Congress. Analysts estimate that without new funds the IMF could only manage one more major rescue.

Asian markets again failed to capitalise on Monday's huge gains with most markets heading lower for the second day running. The Thai market was hardest hit falling nearly 10 per cent but Indonesian stocks also lost 3.4 per cent, while Seoul closed down nearly 3 per cent. The Hang Seng index in Hong Kong fell 2.12 per cent to close at 10,302.61.

Currencies, however, held reasonably steady, boosted by a decline in dollar demand due to the Indonesian debt freeze and South Korean debt rollover plans.

Duke says UK in recession already

By CHRIS AYRES

EDWARD DUKE, chief executive of Beauford, yesterday claimed that Britain was already suffering from a manufacturing recession, as his ceramics company issued a stark profits warning.

Shares in Beauford fell 8p to 15p — nearly a third of their value last year — after it said that although pre-tax profits for the year ended December 31 would be more than the previous year's £1 million, they would fall significantly below market expectations.

Mr Duke said the company had suffered mainly from the Asian financial crisis. "They have all pulled back in blind panic. It's very difficult and I think there's worse to come.

Our customers can't understand what's going on."

He said the company, which makes 30 per cent of its sales in Asia, had started rationalisation at two subsidiaries, Wade and Allied Insulators, to tackle the problem. Seago and VZS, two other divisions, have merged. The company was also suffering from high exchange rates, which had created low margins and pushed the sector into recession. Beauford's results, to be published next month, would be "no where near what we expected," Mr Duke said. However, he added that he was still glad the company had pulled out of engineering in 1996.

Confident Scholl to step out a further 10%

By KATHY LIPARI

SCHOLL, the footwear and personal healthcare group, is confident of reporting at least a 10 per cent improvement in pre-tax profits when it unveils its 1997 earnings next month. Stuart Wallis, the chairman, said yesterday that he expected Scholl would produce results well in line with market forecasts, in spite of the impact of the stronger pound on exports and sales.

Analysts are predicting Scholl will record pre-tax profits of about £23 million (£4 million) for the 1997 financial year, up from £20.6 million in 1996.

Mr Wallis said the revamping of the group's footwear division was also paying dividends with a "very marked improvement" in footwear orders to January, compared with the same period last year.

Forward selling of Scholl's range for this spring and summer was almost completed. Scholl also launched its footwear range for the first time in India last month after signing a manufacturing and distribution agreement with the Bata Footwear Company, the company said.

SBC confident Asia will not impact on profits

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

SWISS Bank Corporation (SBC) said yesterday that the provisions it has made against losses of \$1,900 million (£409 million) to South-East Asia would have no impact on 1997 operating profits.

As SBC shareholders voted overwhelmingly in favour of the £15.2 billion merger with UBS, the bank said it expected to report consolidated operating profits of \$Fr2.1 billion after tax.

However, SBC said its share of the merger restructuring costs would result in a "technical loss" of about \$Fr300 million for the year. About 13,000 jobs are to go over the next four years as the two banks unite to form UBS AG.

Addressing shareholders at yesterday's extraordinary general meeting, Marcel Ospel, chief executive officer of SBC, said he was con-

vinced the merger was the right way to go. He added that client decisions had been "few and far between".

Mr Ospel also argued that the "root cause" of many of the job losses was not the merger. "Several thousand jobs are being shed because the financial services industry is still undergoing change. Merger or no merger, we would sooner or later have been compelled to react to this reality," he said.

About 3,000 of the job cuts are expected to fall on the investment banking operations in London. Staff morale at UBS, which is expected to bear the brunt of the cuts, has been extremely poor since learning that the merged investment banking unit will be known as Warburg Dillon Read.

Sears close to US deal for Cable & Co

By JASON NISSE

SEARS, the embattled retailing group, is expected to announce the sale of its Cable & Co shoe stores to Nine West, the US group, in the next few days. The price tag for the 24-shop operation is believed to be as high as £16 million.

The deal is the last part of the break up of the British Shoe Corporation (BSC), the business that once sold more than a

quarter of all the shoes in Britain. This disposal has been masterminded by David James, the company doctor, and has cost Sears about £150 million.

Cable & Co, the upmarket business, was the only profitable part of BSC. Mr James told *The Times* that he believed the secret of Cable & Co's success was due to the fact that nobody had applied any "good ideas" to it. Nine West has been hit by corporate

governance and supply problems in the US but this has not hampered its UK growth. It bought the Pied à Terre chain two years ago and last year bought the shoe concessions business from Sears for £9 million.

Since then Sears has sold Dolcis to a group led by Alexon, the fashion retailer, Shoe Express to a consortium led by Philip Green, the former boss of Amber Day, and Shoe City to Bretano,

the Belgian shoe operation. Mr James has transferred the BSC distribution centre in Leicester to Freemans, the home shopping business that Sears is planning to demerge this year.

Sears also terminated its £344 million outsourcing deal with Andersen Consulting and is taking back onto its payroll 650 staff transferred to Andersen.

Sears shares slipped 1½p to 46½p yesterday, a new low.

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK
Stock Market Writer
of the Year

Misys share jump could land it in the elite 100 club

HIGH-SOARING Misys looks set to join the ranks of the chosen few and become a constituent of the top 100 companies. That was the buzz going round the Square Mile yesterday as shares in the information and technology specialist leapt 140p to a new high of £24.92.

At this level, the group now carries a price tag of £2.77 billion and is currently dearer than Blue Circle Industries, a current constituent, down 9p at 32 1/4p, which is capitalised at £2.5 billion.

Brokers say Misys may well qualify for entry to the elite club when the FTSE 100 index steering committee next meets in March for its quarterly review. FTSE committees are chosen on their capitalisation.

The rest of the equity market saw its record-breaking run finally grind to a halt after seven consecutive days of gains that have carried the index 448-points higher, or almost 9 per cent.

The inevitable bout of profit-taking was easily contained, with the FTSE 100 index managing to more than halve earlier losses, in spite of opening falls on Wall Street. It closed 17.0 points down at 5,595.8, on turnover of 883 million shares.

Last night fund managers were keeping their fingers crossed that the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee will keep interest rates pegged at 7 1/2 per cent when the outcome of their meeting is posted at midday.

The City gave a thumbs-up to the £830 million worth of disposals and proposed share buy-back at Dalgety. The shares responded with a leap of 49 1/2p at 34 1/2p. It brings the total value of disposals made by the company in recent weeks to £1.1 billion.

The food manufacturer has hit the market with a number of profit warnings in recent months. Now it plans to reward shareholders with a £650 million share buy-back. Brokers say some investors may choose to sell into the current rise.

Reuters rallied 40p to 560p, with Brian Newman at Henderson Crompton, the broker, selling clients the fall in the shares had been overdue. British Aerospace went into a steep climb, adding 32p at £16.34. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, has been pushing the shares since the Government agreed to plough more than £100 million into



Ken Hanna, chief executive, left, and Sir Denys Henderson, chairman of Dalgety, up 49 1/2p at 34 1/2p on company disposals

the company this week to help to fund the design and development of a new series of Airbus passenger aircraft.

Mega merger partners SmithKline Beecham, up 6 1/2p at 837p, and Glaxo Wellcome, 17p stronger at £19.44, made some modest headway after struggling off an early bout of profit-taking. ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, is urging clients to "buy" shares in both companies.

The bears gained the upper hand in BP as the price slipped 5p to 820p, but it seems clear that a two-way pull has developed in the shares. Merrill Lynch, the broker, has downgraded its fourth quarter net income forecast from £67 million to about £610 million before next week's results.

Ugland International put on 9 1/2p at 94p with the help of a "buy" recommendation from NatWest Markets, a broker, which is forecasting that earnings will double over the next couple of years. The broker is forecasting a rise in earnings of 42 per cent in 1997 and 45 per cent in the current year.

Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, and rival UBS have taken a shine to Capital Shopping, 4 1/2p better at 444p, after full-year results, with the net asset value of 392 1/2p at the top end of expectations. The news may also signal positive performance from Cleisfield, 2p up at 355 1/2p, and Land Securities, down 13p at £10.70.

GILT-EDGED: The bond market was in a cautious mood as the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee began pondering whether to raise rates again. In the futures pit, the March series of the Long Gilt fell 1/8 to £122 1/2, while in the cash market Treasury 7.25 per cent 2007 finished £11 1/2 down at £108 1/2.

NEW YORK: Stocks were mixed at midday, with the Dow Jones industrial average down 47.33 points, at 8,113.02, from another round of profit-taking.

Life is not all it is cracked up to be these days. That is the conclusion of NatWest Markets, the broker, which has expressed disappointment at the new business figures being published by the life companies.

Prudential, down 11p at 790p, and United Assurance, 19 1/2p off at 500 1/2p, both proved disappointing. Sales growth from the remaining companies either matched, or just surpassed expectations.

David Nisbet, at NatWest, says: "Although the sector should remain in favour through the results



DALGETY

Meanwhile, Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, rates the shares as "outperformer" and is pushing them to clients. It is looking for operating income in 1997 of £45 billion, up 6 per cent. Lehman has also set a price target of 960p.

Further setbacks for prices of aluminium and copper on commodity markets again undermined the likes of Rio Tinto, down another 2 1/2p at 806p, and Billiton, 9p off at 147 1/2p. Salomon Smith Barney, the broker, has switched its recommendation in BSKYB from "neutral" to "outperformer". The satellite broadcaster responded with a rise of 7p at 368p.

Dorchester touched 205p before ending the session 9p better at 195 1/2p. The latest data from phase 3 trials on Macrotinon, a treatment for osteoporosis, have proved encouraging.

A profits warning left Beaufort nursing a fall of 8p at 15p. The engineer has warned the market that profits for the full year will fall short of expectations. Powerscreen dropped 2 1/2p to 27 1/2p, with investors continuing to reflect upon "financial irregularities" that will result in £47 million worth of provisions.

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MAJOR INDICES

Table with columns for Index Name, Value, and Change. Includes New York (Dow Jones, S&P Composite), Tokyo (Nikkei Average, Hang Seng), Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London (FT 30, FTSE 100, FTSE 250, FTSE 1000, FTSE Eurotop 100, FTSE All-Share, FTSE Non Financials, FTSE Fixed Interest, FTSE Govt Secs), and Hong Kong.

RECENT ISSUES

Table listing recent issues with columns for Company Name, Price, and Change. Includes Abbey Natl Dublin II, Diageo B, General Inds, Longmead (135), Bacton, Razzback Vehicles, Richards Group, Sanctuary Warrants, and Second Scot Zr Dv Pt.

RIGHTS ISSUES

Table listing rights issues with columns for Company Name, Price, and Change. Includes Derwent Vly n/p (520) 41 1/2.

MAJOR CHANGES

Table listing major stock price changes with columns for Company Name, Price, and Change. Includes RISES (Dalgety, Weir, TT Group, Westbury, Riemer, Bacton, Hall Eng, Lord, Delta, Lux Service, Unilever, COLT Telecom, Yule Catto, Bovis Homes, Vodafone, DCS Gp, Kewill Sys, Ladbroke) and FALLS (Trust Motor Gp, Bioscience Ind, GRE, Railtrack, Vospar Thom, Cadbury-Schw, AMVESCAP, Cable Wireless, Orange, Nonch Union, Rio Tinto, Whitbread, Jarvis).

Closing Prices Page 31

TEMPUS A dog's dinner

DALGETY never made a decent fist of petfoods. It is still a marketer of consumer brands was always in doubt but to make matters worse, the company ran into trouble in the crucial business of getting the product into the shops. Given the poor track record, a sale price of more than twice last year's turnover is a creditable achievement. It also means that some value has been generated from the £465 million purchase of the brands from Quaker Oats two and a half years ago.

For Nestlé the price looks full but the Swiss should raise the poor margins of Spillers Petfoods. Nestlé is still taking over 13 plants which must leave scope for more closures as Nestlé persuades its Friskie to cohabit with Spillers' Felix and Arthur brands. The real prize for Nestlé is to raise its share in catfood.

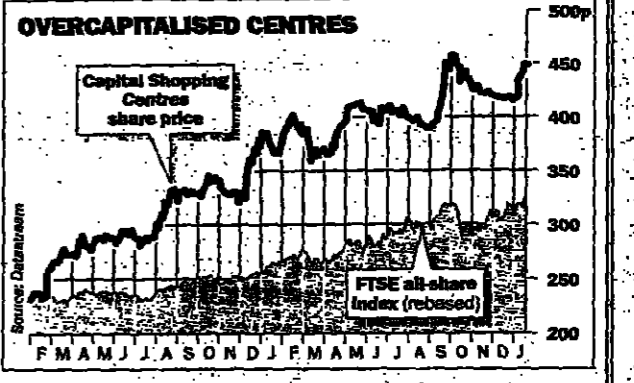
Near number one in the US, the Swiss trail behind Mars, owner of Whiskas, in Europe. This deal should give Nestlé equal share with Mars in the UK and the muscle to take on Whiskas elsewhere. Dalgety is left with a bizarre collection of assets. On the one hand it is the world leader in pig breeding, a company that makes 12 per cent margins and a 40 per cent return on capital. On the other hand it supports a £1 billion animal feeds operation that barely makes any money. Figs are almost a biotech operation that could command a fancy rating, but animal feeds are an appalling market with farm incomes falling and a shrinking livestock industry. Logically, the feeds business should be sold for whatever it will fetch, allowing pigs to roam free. That prospect makes Dalgety a buy.

Capital Shop.

RETAIL sales at Capital Shopping Centres grew 9.5 per cent last year, well ahead of the national figure of 8 per cent for non-food retail. No better evidence could be found for the war of attrition conducted by big shopping centres on the average British high street.

CSC is not against the new focus on town centres; it may even regard it as a blessing. The ban on new out-of-town centres gives CSC as near a monopoly as you get in the property world and protects its centres from competition: the only known threat being the potential of Bluewater Park to move its catchment area north of the Thames to CSC's Lakeside.

The real issue facing CSC is not environmental or the market, where rents continue to rise. It is internal: CSC's gearing of 19 per cent is inadequate for a property company enjoying such strong growth in values. CSC's bosses may feel comfortable with a pristine balance sheet but fireproofers did the company no favours in bidding for the Incy development in Southampton or the Manchester Arndale Centre, rumoured to be sold to the Pru. A company clutching 25-year leases from all the top retailers in the land should have no problem raising finance on reasonable terms. CSC is right to be cautious about its debt but in the end, if it cannot buy well, the capital may be better employed by investors elsewhere. CSC's best growth is behind it.



British Airways

WHAT would be the dream ticket for British Airways? Well, yesterday it was almost clutching it in sweating palms. January's traffic figures concealed a statistic which would surprise most observers of the airline's performance. Traffic to the Pacific actually rose 1.5 per cent year on year.

Of course, the overall figure probably conceals terrible results from specific countries. Korea was a mess and Japan was apparently down. Meanwhile, BA is filling every corner of its planes to Bombay and Delhi which have caused the Asian financial whirlwind and are enjoying a surge in traffic. But the real reason for the growth is that BA is profiting from eastward traffic to Asia from tourists taking advantage of the collapse of Asian currencies.

If the Asian scare is overplayed, there remains a worry about load factors which have been in decline as BA brings new planes on to its routes. In January, loads were down 3 per cent year-on-year with capacity up 11 per cent in Europe and 8 per cent in intercontinental flights. The worry is that BA and its rivals will be forced to dump new Jumbo jets initially destined for profitable Asian routes on to the highly competitive transatlantic market.

Some Asian airlines have been delaying delivery of new planes but BA has been building up its fleet. Retirement of old aircraft is an option but any sign that new planes are being purchased in the Nevada desert, the bad news for this industry.

Investors could be forgiven for sneering, given that the sector has underperformed the market by more than 20 per cent since the beginning of last year. But Bryant's results, which saw profits outperform analysts' expectations by some £2 million, proved that the pessimism is overdue. The market has finally realised that a steady price in-house prices is possible without a boom, and that builders can make money outside the M25.

There are only two bearish factors looming: interest rate rises and the threat of a greenfield tax. However, the long end of the bond market suggests interest rates should fall and the sector is still worth buying as more positive results are expected.

Housebuilding

ANDREW MACKENZIE, chief executive of Bryant, must be on to something. On Tuesday he mused that shares in housebuilders were not reflecting gains in the housing market. Yesterday, the comatose housebuilders behaved as though they had

been kicked. Bryant made a 6p gain to 128p, while its larger rival Berkeley saw a 19p gain in spite of having a development in South London turned down.

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COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices including COCOA, ROBUSTA COFFEE, WHITE SUGAR, MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION, and various oil and grain prices.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table of London financial futures including Long Gilt, German Govt Bond, Japanese Govt Bond, Three Mth Sterling, Three Mth Eurodollar, Three Mth Euroswap, Three Mth ECU, and FTSE 100.

DOLLAR RATES

Table of dollar rates for various countries including Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, and the UK.

MONEY RATES (%)

Table of money rates for Prime Bank Bills, Treasury Bills, and various bank rates.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Table of European money deposits for various currencies and terms.

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Table of gold and precious metals prices including Bullion, Kruggerand, and Platinum.

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Table of sterling spot and forward rates for various currencies and terms.

LIFE OPTIONS

Table of life insurance options including various policies and rates.

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

Table of London metal exchange prices for various metals.

OFFICIALS (Volume per day)

Table of official statistics including Copper, Zinc, and Aluminium.

BRITISH AIRWAYS

Table of British Airways flight schedules and routes.

HOUSEBUILDING

Table of housebuilding statistics and company performance.

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices including oil, grain, and metals.

FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table of financial futures including government bonds and indices.

DOLLAR RATES

Table of dollar rates for various countries.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'There is', 'locking', and 'Boule'.

السنة من الاجل

Transport planning with Mr Toad



GRAHAM SEAFJEANT

Good intentions are no substitute for integrated long-term transport planning. Sometimes they can be better, as John Prescott showed yesterday.

To promote one of those grand pre-emptive consultation exercises, this time on a sustainable environment, the deputy PM made a very public 20-minute walk to work.

Sceptical reporters noticed, however, that a large chauffeur-driven Jaguar had purred up outside Mr Prescott's home, then trailed him to Westminster. Between expatiating on the charm of turning London's traffic-ringed squares over to walkers and the potential attraction of meeting Glenda Jackson on the bus, the minister explained. The gas-guzzling Jag has to carry his red boxes because he is not allowed to take them on a bus, should one turn up.

Like the rest of the population, Mr Prescott sensibly takes best advantage of private and public transport options. Most people would love to walk 20 minutes to work on a sunny morning, or to most other places a mile away, if

they did not routinely have to carry heavy shopping, babies, commercial samples, costly computers, insurance brochures or red boxes.

In the real world, sadly, most of us no longer live round the corner, and few have the back-up of a chauffeur-driven Jag. A survey of staff in one Thames Valley office block found that their average journey to work was 15 miles.

Four out of five had no easy public transport alternative to a private car. Two thirds found it better to commute on grounds of housing costs. They may be no more typical than Secretaries of State. Both are characteristic of modern Britain, where work and housing are both far more widely dispersed.

As many poor people will testify, running a car helps to find work and to shop and run a home cheaper. For the majority who no longer live in city centres or

concentrated communities, cars are often vital to living standards. Rising volumes of private traffic have also become a key to rising productivity, in retailing, distribution and manufacturing alike.

Whenever a service is contracted out to specialists, road traffic is likely to grow. When a big dinosaur factory closes, to be replaced by many small high-tech operations, road traffic grows. And as Mr Prescott knows, every time he agrees a big greenbelt housing development, road traffic will expand disproportionately.

Train and bus travel are so modest by comparison that economic trends would have to shift remarkably for even half the extra traffic expected over the next dozen years to be carried by public transport. It might even be a triumph of policy. But if government tried to do that by making private road transport slower, less

convenient or much more expensive, it would push productivity into reverse and cut living standards for most people except the rich or the nomenclature. One minister gave the game away when arriving late from Westminster for a broadcast from Norwich, a city with a relatively good rail link with the capital. When we have an integrated transport poli-

cy, she said, it will not take three hours to drive out of London.

Such thinking will make good intentions a disastrous substitute for long-term planning. Sadly, signs appear almost daily that any initiative that harasses motorists to use their cars less will find ministerial favour. Positive planning would aim to improve public transport in with development. For instance, cities that can expand enough to have one of everything but retain a single compact centre are one planning ideal for transport as much as they remain an ideal for much else. And if planners want to make urban life more attractive, they will make more provision for residents' and visitors' cars, not less.

Far more important, because of its dominant role, is to make car travel more environmentally friendly and, by better management of urban through routes, to

make it more efficient. Aside from higher petrol taxes, there is not much sign of that sort of planning.

This week, while Jag-fan Mr Prescott lauded walking, cycling and buses, Tony Blair and Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, were cooling with delight at having attracted production of the new small Jaguar to Britain. A fast car designed to appeal to the Mr or Miss Toad in most drivers is being promoted with a £43 million bribe from taxpayers. In terms of jobs and the future prosperity of Merseyside, they were right to be pleased. It looks a bargain.

As a car to be proud of, however, compare the new Jaguar with a car we have made no effort to bring to Britain. Eight weeks ago in Japan, Toyota launched its Prius model, a dual petrol/electric car that slashes petrol consumption, curbs carbon dioxide emissions and can do away with urban pollution while

giving motorists a normal car without the usual limitations of electric vehicles. Early orders placed in Tokyo have already persuaded Toyota to double production targets. But that only means 2,000 a month, which is less than 2 per cent of the extra output rate Toyota hopes to achieve within the next few years. There are vague future plans to market the model in North America but none as yet for Europe. Toyota GB has yet to record any interest from government, even though it makes cars in Derbyshire.

If cars are to be greener, models such as the Prius and rivals being planned by other manufacturers will make the first huge step to improve urban traffic and cut pollution drastically. Even cleaner fuel cells are not likely to be practical until the next deadline for cutting greenhouse gases has passed. To make an impact, however, governments will have to encourage use, stimulate mass production of the engines and bring costs down. That would be real transport planning.

There is no magic formula for corporate governance

Tony O'Reilly, chairman and chief executive of Heinz, says shareholder value is the best test of good practice

One of the topics that becomes fashionable when markets go up and becomes less so when they are somewhat more turbulent, is corporate governance. Some apologists for this theme believe that there is a magical formula — "the one size fits all" theory — that, if put simply, will deliver greater profitability, more accountability, increased transparency and a strengthened share price.

The formula varies with the purveyor, but the general proposition is that a majority of independent directors, whatever that phrase might mean, are the essential prerequisite for success and that independent committees of the board are a condition precedent to the absence of corporate and personal conflict of interest and an increase in share value. Much of what is advocated is excellent, and indeed most companies practise the sounder aspects of these policies and issues, where appropriate, a clear statement of corporate governance.

Heinz issued such a statement over 18 years ago, and with suitable and minor amendments, it has stood the test of time rather well. For example, the annualised return to shareholders since 1980 has been a very acceptable 23 per cent.

Does this mean, therefore, that we at Heinz have found the secret of corporate governance, and that the results achieved confirm that "our size fits all"? The answer, regrettably, is no.

There is no perfect board structure that suits all companies. Companies grow or decline for a thousand different reasons, and the board and its constitution are, alas, only one of them. History, brand share (again, often granted by history), the condition of markets, good fortune, currency fluctuations, the state of the labour market, the chief executive and his or her officers, the quality of the balance sheet, capital investment, capital grants and the effective tax rate — as the Irish Republic so glitteringly proves — all combine to cause profit or loss and improve or disimprove margins.

I have been the president of



Tony O'Reilly says the best protection for shareholders is in complete reporting

a major multinational company with sales now of almost \$10 billion for over 24 years. I have also been a non-executive, or as certain people call it, an independent or outside director, of a number of major US companies. They include Mobil Oil, Bankers Trust, The Washington Post, and in the UK, the General Electric company. Importantly, because of its overseas role, I was elected twice by my peers for two three-year terms of the New York Stock Exchange.

Quite separately, I have

been the non-executive chairman and the majority shareholder of Independent Newspapers, Waterford Wedgwood, and Fitzwilliam plc, whose combined market capitalisation is over \$3 billion.

All of these experiences should make one feel equipped to comment on the "one size fits all" theory. It does not. Business has a curious way of teaching you humility and as Robert Burns observed, "the best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley".

The most an experienced

executive would commit himself to, is that a mixed board of inside and outside directors in roughly equal numbers might be a sensible structure, that the compensation and audit committees, having an oversight responsibility, should be composed of outside directors, that the nomination and public policy committees should have a majority of outside directors — whose information and experiences are needed for the future growth policies of the company. (At

the end of the day, it is the company's directors and officers who are responsible for the company's performance. It is their duty to act in the best interests of the company and its shareholders. They should be held accountable for their actions and decisions. This is the only way to ensure that the company is run in the best interests of its shareholders and the public. It is the only way to ensure that the company is run in a transparent and accountable manner. It is the only way to ensure that the company is run in a responsible and ethical manner. It is the only way to ensure that the company is run in a sustainable manner. It is the only way to ensure that the company is run in a way that creates long-term value for its shareholders and the public.

Heinz, the chief executive officer is nominated by a committee of outside directors only.)

The moral of all of this is what you might expect. Business is difficult, dangerous, exciting, and where done properly, rewarding. Boards both monitor and direct the policy of the company, but executives, and not the board, do the work. Where the chief executive officer — as a proxy for the company's health — does not do his job, the board must do their job and select a new chief executive. This is their primary responsibility and they must not shirk it.

Parallel to this, I would add that one of the primary roles for a CEO lies in choosing and nominating his successor. We have done this at Heinz, and every company should have a succession and contingency plan that guarantees or assures the future of the business.

Finally, let me say, as a non-practising solicitor, that all directors, both inside and out, have the same fiduciary responsibility, and bear the same legal liability, which in the main is joint and several. What this latter point means is that if the directors' and officers' liability insurance is exceeded, each individual director is potentially liable for the failure to discharge his or her fiduciary responsibility.

The best protection for shareholders remains in complete reporting each year. It tells you all you ever wanted to know about your company, its directors, its officers, their pay and perquisites, their future pensions, any material contracts they have with the company, their stock options, and the number of shares they own beneficially or in trust. Short of their sex life, you can learn almost everything that you need to know about the company's directors and officers from the annual report. And as if this is not enough, then the combined statutory filings will further inform your fireside reading.

Now that is what I call corporate governance, and that is why we should continue to insist on shareholder value as the primary test of good corporate governance.

organising a number of events that will publicise, if you like, the thrill of ownership." Expensive, but more fun than investing in wine. And possibly more lucrative.

TO THE NatWest Tower, sorry, the International Financial Centre, to hear of NatWest's 1998 personal equity plan. Super. Although the bank no longer occupies the building, it occasionally uses the empty upper floors for events. Just one tiny problem — no lights. So NatWest staff had to bring their own lamps to allow guests to read the handouts. Really, they needn't have bothered.

MARTIN WALLER

Please tell the machine why you want a job with this organisation

The methods used by companies to attract temporary staff look likely to be fundamentally changed by technology over the next two years. The shake-up has begun by Alfred Marks, the British subsidiary of Adecco — the world's largest recruitment company — which will this month launch a series of high-tech offensives to get more temporary staff on its books. Alfred Marks has also been in talks with leading supermarket companies, thought to include Tesco and Sainsbury, to predict how services such as Internet shopping will change the way people work.

Technology has already caused a minor revolution in the recruitment sector. Mobile phones make temporary employees contactable — and therefore available for work — at all times of day. It is estimated that 70 per cent of white-collar temporary staff in Britain now own mobiles.

The market is likely to change further with the use of interviewing software, the Internet, and videophones. Although the technology is still available only to a few, recruitment companies believe that services such as digital television may make it widespread within two years.

Alfred Marks will this month launch Xpert, a computer program that registers and interviews clients to find out their skills and attitudes, and whether they will enjoy working in a certain company.

The software dealing with attitudes has been developed with Saville and Holdsworth, the occupational psychologists. Alfred Marks says that it is labour-saving, thorough and

unbiased. Simon Lillywhite, Adecco chief operating officer, said: "Employers demand a workforce that is carefully selected, not only to meet the skills required to do the job, but also to fit happily into the company's culture. The selection process needs to be right first time to ensure employers avoid costly mistakes."

Adecco expects to use Xpert-based software within two years to interview clients by videophone, allowing people to look for temporary work from their own homes in their free time. The company claims that it will take much

temporary labour — especially for warehouse staff and distributors — when Internet home shopping becomes more popular.

Telephone banking systems will soon be able to recognise your voice, instead of making you key in passwords and account numbers. The same technology could be used to improve efficiency and security for many other telephone services. A European Union-funded consortium is expected next month to publish results of a research project — called CAVE, for caller verification — on the commercial future of the technology. It is expected to show that UK banks could be using caller verification by early 1999. The project consortium includes Union Bank of Switzerland, PTT Telecoms, of The Netherlands, and Vocalis, the British company already providing voice recognition systems for Abbey National.

The loss-making Vocalis this week welcomed as its chief executive Charles Halle, a former director of IBM's e-business division.

Businesses yesterday heaved a sigh of relief when the European Commission said that it would not set up a regulatory body with legal powers to police the Internet. However, it said that international law needed to be clarified or adapted to cover disputes over transnational labour, data protection, copyright and consumer protection. It also called for a review of the system by which companies are registered on the Internet.

THE ICE BOX

THE HOT NEWS ON INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

of the stress out of interviews, encouraging more people to apply for jobs.

Adecco is also testing a scheme called Job Shop, which will involve installing electronic kiosks in public places, such as railway stations, where potential clients can register with the agency and look for vacancies. Again, this allows people in jobs to seek temporary work outside office hours.

Adecco claims that all these methods of hiring staff are necessary in the present economy, in which jobs are increasingly short term. It also says that its research with supermarkets shows that there will be huge demand for

CHRIS AYRES

Chuckling it

CHARLES Bellamy Young, deputy chairman at Canary Wharf since 1996, quit last night — again. He was first brought in by the Reichmanns in 1988 after a career around the world with Citibank ended in the running of its London operations, themselves now heading for Canary Wharf as it happens, but left the board for the first time at the 1992 administration.

Chuck, still only 57, was head of marketing and leasing, and he appears to have marketed and leased himself out of a job. Just a year ago Canary Wharf was 82 per cent

let it is now 98 per cent full, with only three floors at the top of the tower empty. A property man, Mike Hussey, is taking on his duties. They were a little vague at the tower on what this victim of his own success might do next, although some sort of equities operation with one of his sons is rumoured. Still, I cannot see him staying idle for long.



testimonials from such as "Mr S. C. of Wimbledon", and another reminder of those returns. But no mention of where such riches might lie. Venezuelan bonds? Phlogiston futures? Even odder, the firm putting out the leaflet does not know either. Richard Barker, assistant marketing manager at the curiously named The House of Lintours (sic) in Oxford Street, London, says: "I would have to get the mailshot out, because we have various business interests."

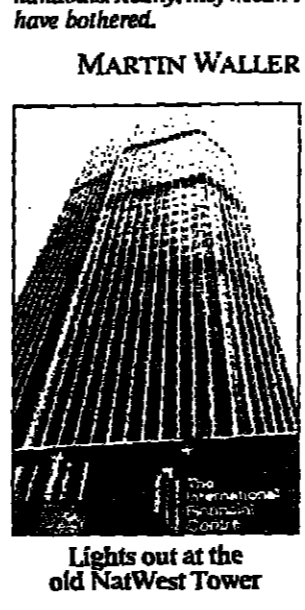
So how many offer such huge returns? "None of our marketing or advertising ever offers any returns whatsoever." And what exactly do you market? "I don't think we're under any obligation to reveal any of our business in-

terests." Go on, just the one. He grudgingly admits to property, promises to call back in two hours, but doesn't. Again I search the document for the location of this Philosopher's Stone. And the pre-paid envelope is addressed to "Investing in Wine". Come, come, Mr Barker, why so shy? *In vino veritas.*

Racing cert

HARD to believe that the City needs much encouragement to visit the Cheltenham racecourse next month — half the people I call seem to be "in meetings" for the duration — but the British Horseracing Board is holding a special preview on March 10, entrance free, at the Merchant Taylors' Hall at Threadneedle Street. Special guests include top jockeys Norman Williamson and Mick Fitzgerald and trainers Charlie Brooks and Micky Hammond, none of whom I had heard of, alas, as I have other vices entirely. But beware, there is something of a hidden agenda.

Jim Furlong, a former equities man at Merrills and NatWest, now chairman of the BFB's ownership marketing group among other things, is running the meeting. The real purpose, he admits, is to identify those who might be interested in owning racers, or parts thereof. "We're



Lights out at the old NatWest Tower



"It's tin — Warren Buffett beat me to the silver"

Bottled out

A READER calls, intrigued by a mailshot introducing him to an investment market that provides "potential returns of up to 1,500 per cent in just six years without the obvious risks". There follow pages of

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Rexam in £9.8m Australian purchase

By KATHY LIPARI

REXAM, the paper and packaging group, yesterday announced it had acquired an Australian envelope manufacturer for £9.8 million and at the same time sold its Welton businesses for £7.6 million.

The acquisition of Envelope Specialists, a company based in Perth, is expected to make Rexam the second largest player in the Australian envelope market.

A spokesman for Rexam said the purchase of the company, which made an operating profit £1.5 million on turnover of £8.7 million in the year to June 1997, would enable it to challenge Spicers Papers for the market leadership in Australia. Economies of scale are expected.

Rexam is in the final stages of its restructuring programme and the sale of Welton to British Polythene Industries, Britain's largest polythene film producer, is its 20th business divestment in just over a year.

However, the Welton deal is not part of the company's Octagon programme that has so far managed to offload 17 of the 20 companies that it has earmarked for disposal.

Rexam decided to part with Welton after it lost its largest customer last November, a loss that would have resulted in a sales reduction of about £13 million in 1998.

Rexam shares rose yesterday 2 1/2p to 256p.



London bound: Jonathan Stewart, left, chief executive; Scott Nelson, centre, chairman; and director Sergei Shafranik

TUC urges Brown to spend £3.3bn on welfare reforms

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT



Monks: "cut rates"

THE TUC today calls for a £3.3 billion package to be spent on the low paid, poor families and older unemployed workers who currently do not benefit from the Government's Welfare to Work initiative.

In a Budget submission to Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the TUC also calls for a reduction in interest rates.

John Monks, TUC General Secretary, said: "The Chancellor must take Budget action to boost the economy - but current high

interest rates are putting economic growth, jobs and social inclusion at risk.

With so many people in the UK living in poverty, there is a need to reform the welfare state, but this has to help the low paid and families. This help should include increased child benefit, which is a proven way of tackling poverty and encouraging work."

The union movement has called for a cut in interest rates because it believes that high rates will damage the Government's commitment to growth and employment.

The TUC wants £2.8 billion to go on measures to help the low paid and low-income families and £500 million on expanding the new deal programme of the Welfare to Work scheme so that older workers are helped to find jobs.

The call to include older workers comes amid expectation that the Government will make such a move as unemployment among young people falls.

Ministers have also been lobbied to help the older jobless because they tend to be

EuroSov plans placing in London market

By MARTIN BARROW

GROWING City interest in the oil and gas industry of the former Soviet Union, underpinned by multibillion-dollar investments by Shell and BP, has brought EuroSov Energy to market in London.

EuroSov, a UK oil production and development company operating in Siberia, is raising £13 million via a share placing at 1p each, valuing the business at £35 million.

Production attributable to EuroSov is about 2,800 barrels of oil per day and proven and probable reserves are 84.7 million barrels of oil.

The company is headed by Scott Nelson, executive chairman, and Jonathan Stewart, chief executive officer. Dealings get under way on February 9.

Burmah Castrol sells LNG stake for £42m

BURMAH CASTROL, the UK lubricants and specialist chemicals company, is to sell its remaining 50 per cent stake in its liquefied natural gas (LNG) transportation joint venture to Mitsui O.S.K. Lines and Nissho Iwai Corporation, both of Japan, for £42 million. The disposal will give other venture partners, for £22.3 million. The venture rose to an exceptional profit of about £27.3 million in 1997, contributed £7.28 million to Burmah's operating profits in 1997.

Burmah's interest in the venture dates back to the early 1970s. It involves the carriage of LNG from Indonesia to Japan in eight vessels owned by US institutions and chartered on a long-term basis. The transportation agreement is with Pertamina, the Indonesian state oil company. The disposal reflects Burmah's decision to focus on its core Castrol and chemicals businesses.

EU clears Roche buy

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, which will lead the inquiry that will determine the fate of the proposed £100 billion merger of Glaxo, Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham, has cleared the £6.67 billion purchase by Roche of Courage, an international holding company, after a five-month inquiry. Approval was granted after Roche, the Swiss pharmaceutical group, agreed to sell most of its in-vitro diagnostics (IVD) business.

ICI's Propafilm deal

IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES has agreed to sell its global interests in the Propafilm business to UCB SA, Propafilm, with an annual turnover of about £50 million, produces and sells polypropylene films used in the packaging industry. As part of the agreement, ICI will provide a toll manufacturing service to UCB for a short period. Completion of the agreement is expected within the next few weeks and sale proceeds, to be paid in cash, will reduce ICI's debts.

Trust tops benchmark

THROMORSTON TRUST, the £307 million smaller-companies investment trust managed by Framlington, outperformed its benchmark for the second consecutive year after restructuring its 1995-96 portfolio away from high yielding unquoted stocks. Net asset value per share increased by 5.9 per cent to 95.3p in the year to the end of November, compared with a 5.4 per cent rise in the FTSE SmallCap index.

Gardiner suffers fall

GARDINER GROUP, the electronic security products wholesaler, suffered a fall in pre-tax profits from £4.4 million to £3.7 million after a £1 million exceptional item to cover the costs of reorganisation in the year to end October. During the year Gardiner acquired AlarmExpress in Britain and Elkron in France. Sales rose from £96.7 million to £98 million. Total dividend for the year rose from 0.95p to 1p out of earnings down from 2.62p to 2.19p. The shares rose from 22 1/2p to 23p.

Nightfreight payout cut

NIGHTFREIGHT, the parcels delivery and freight forwarding company, has cut its final dividend from 2.25p to 1.30p, reducing the total for the year from 3.55p to 1.80p. It suffered a fall in pre-tax profits from £5 million to £3 million in the year to end November on sales up from £81 million to £88 million. Earnings fell from 6.70p to 4.16p. David Cobb, chairman, said: "Costs have been reduced and will be monitored to ensure our competitive position is maintained."

Thailand's Mr Sandwich earns an honest crust

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN BANGKOK

EARNING a crust used to be easy for Sirivat Voravejvithukun. Until the Asian crisis he was the darling of Thailand's investors, a millionaire market analyst and a fund manager who enjoyed celebrity status.

hawkers, and says his modest goal is to become known as Thailand's sandwich king.

All that remains of Sirivat's glamorous life are occasional stints on television talk shows, where the subject is his fall from riches to rags after the Government's attempt last August to combat the country's economic crisis by reforming the finance sector.

He shot to national prominence in 1987 when, as chief executive of Asia Securities Trading, an affiliate of Bangkok Bank, he backed a bearish market on Black Monday and made bold investment decisions while others fled the Thai bourse.

Sirivat, who headed the company for 11 years, says: "I helped Asia Securities to make about 200 million baht [then about £45 million] profit from its portfolio investment that year." He left the company in early 1988 over a profit-sharing dispute with its owners.

He became involved in the local property sector but that collapsed in 1996. He says: "I targeted my Mission Hill project at Thai nouveau riche looking for a second home." Sirivat had sold only about 30 per cent of his heavily leveraged project. Since the second quarter of 1997 he has had trouble financing that debt.

ACCOUNTANCY

Disclosure has its rewards

Anthony Carey looks at best practice and examines the challenges ahead

Tim Hely Hutchinson, group chief executive of Hodder Headline, the publisher, must often have wondered how to address the Earl of Donoughmore, until recently the company's chairman. Such uncertainty would not have been due to any lack of knowledge of proper forms of address, but rather a reflection of the fact that the chairman also happened to be his father.

The issue of family relationships in the boardroom has not featured much in reviews of corporate governance in recent years, but mention of it in Hodder Headline's annual report is welcome. The company has just been named the 1998 winner of the smaller company section of the Stock Exchange and Chartered Accountants Annual Awards for Published Accounts for the second year running, the first time a company has retained its title.



Anthony Carey expects companies to give more information

Other helpful governance disclosures made by Hodder Headline include concise biographies of directors, with an overview of their experience within and outside the group and a clear explanation of how performance bonuses are calculated.

The announcement of joint winners of the larger company section, in the form of SmithKline Beecham and Land Securities, represents another first for the Stock Exchange Awards this year. In governance, as in other areas, these companies

have also made voluntary disclosures to supplement information required to be provided. Land Securities, for example, indicates that it believes that all its non-executive directors may be regarded as independent, not currently a disclosure requirement though this will change if the Hampel committee's recommendations are adopted. It also states that its audit committee consists solely of these independent directors.

Although many would regard this as best practice, it goes beyond the letter of the Cadbury requirement, endorsed by Hampel, which states that there should be three non-executive directors on the audit committee of whom two should be independent.

SmithKline Beecham's report highlights the importance that the group attaches to aligning executives' interests with those of the shareholders. Its share ownership guidelines suggest, for instance, that the chief executive should own shares to the value of four times his base salary. Directors also receive a 10 per cent boost to their bonus if they take it in the form of shares.

Hampel offers up a big serving of fudge

THE best that can be said of the Hampel report is that it may turn out to be quite an effective fudge. The final report of the Hampel committee on corporate governance, published last week, showed itself to be responsive to the criticism that had greeted the interim report. Unfortunately, the response generally consisted of inserting placatory clauses of the "or perhaps not" variety wherever its previous work had proved contentious.

It is all a far cry from the original work carried out by Sir Adrian Cadbury and his committee, which started the corporate governance ball rolling. The differences in the work of the two committees are significant in that they reveal cultural differences that go to the heart of the debate.

The Cadbury committee took its cue from Sir Adrian's Quaker roots. The culture was one of questioning and plain speaking of plain truths. The Hampel committee took its cue from Sir Ronnie Hampel, chairman of ICI. His culture appears to be that of the old-style boardroom that knows times have changed but still hankers after the good old days when the outside world just let businessmen get on with what they knew best, which was business. In that culture corporate governance is seen simply as interference and plain speaking of plain truths.

This difference in cultures was obvious from one issue that always had Hampel in a tangle. This was the incompatibility, as he saw it, between accountability and prosperity. Hampel's interim report stated: "The importance of corporate governance lies in its contribution both to business prosperity and to accountability."

Then it said: "In the UK the latter has preoccupied much public debate to the detriment of the former."

In Hampel's final report the words "to the detriment of the former" have been excised. Instead, it soothes: "Public companies are now amongst the most accountable organisations in society. We strongly endorse this accountability."

Then the old red mist descends once more. "But the emphasis on accountability has tended to obscure a board's first responsibility, which it sees as being 'to enhance the prosperity of the business over time'."

Hampel simply cannot accept that well-run companies are likely to be prosperous and that poorly-run companies are not. His dogged intransigence continues over the vexed question of effectiveness.

The report goes through a number of



ROBERT BRUCE

subject to amendment as well. Much of the necessary disclosure is already being provided in the remuneration committee's report and in the narrative in the annual report dealing with internal controls and board structure.

In the future, however, the senior non-executive director will have to be named and many companies are likely to provide more information on the procedure adopted to select newly appointed board members and the means by which collective board performance and that of individual directors has been assessed. Furthermore, the reasons, where applicable, for combining the roles of chairman and chief executive will need to be given.

Hampel has also called on companies to publish "more informative" general statements of remuneration policy. In terms of corporate communications, companies are likely to explain more fully the means by which they keep in touch with institutional and small investors and with employees and the communities in which they operate.

Above all, to ensure the overall value of governance disclosures is greater than the sum of the parts, companies will need to explain how their approach to governance is tailored to help to achieve their mission and to enhance their corporate performance and accountability.

Anthony Carey is Secretary of the Corporate Governance Group of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Sour grapes on mergers

NERVES are jangling as the vast majority of chief executives, particularly those in the United Kingdom, are against them. This has needed KPMG. As a spokesman put it, somewhat tartly, this week: "It is unsurprising that a firm which previously contacted every other member of the Big Six in some panic seeking a merger partner, but failed to do so, is now seeking to malign the mergers."

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Howzat! GOOD judgment from Chris Laine, president of the English ICA. As a man who once faced Wesley Hall, the West Indies demon fast bowler, on a fine Barbados pitch and survived to tell the tale, Laine always has a hankering to get back to the Caribbean and watch cricket. So when the president of the Jamaican accountancy body offered him five days of

intensive consultations about the accountancy profession while watching the Test match at Sabina Park last week, Laine was sorely tempted. Luckily, his diary crowded the chance out. The match, as we know, was abandoned before lunch on the first day.

In perspective GEORGE STAPLE, who was head of the Serious Fraud Of-

fice for five years, was on fine form at the unveiling of the Fraud Advisory Panel this week. He is to chair the body, which is sponsored by the English ICA's audit faculty and which will co-ordinate the fight against fraud. He cited his experiences at the SFO to put the extent of fraud into perspective. Three famous cases in his days at the SFO, he said, were each larger, in terms of loot, than the combined annual total of burglaries in England and Wales.

ROBERT BRUCE

Handwritten note in Arabic script: "سكروا الجول"

Earlier losses halved

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Company	Price	% Chg	Dividend	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
BANKS					
BREWERIES Pubs & REST					
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
FOOD MANUFACTURERS					
ENGINEERING & ELECT					
ELECTRONIC & ELECT					
HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT					
INSURANCE					
MEDIA					
MINING					
PROPERTY					
RETAILERS, GENERAL					
RETAILERS, FOOD					
SUPPORT SERVICES					
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
TRANSPORT					
WATER					

Company	Price	% Chg	Dividend	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
BANKS					
BREWERIES Pubs & REST					
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
FOOD MANUFACTURERS					
ENGINEERING & ELECT					
ELECTRONIC & ELECT					
HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT					
INSURANCE					
MEDIA					
MINING					
PROPERTY					
RETAILERS, GENERAL					
RETAILERS, FOOD					
SUPPORT SERVICES					
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
TRANSPORT					
WATER					

Company	Price	% Chg	Dividend	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
BANKS					
BREWERIES Pubs & REST					
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
FOOD MANUFACTURERS					
ENGINEERING & ELECT					
ELECTRONIC & ELECT					
HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT					
INSURANCE					
MEDIA					
MINING					
PROPERTY					
RETAILERS, GENERAL					
RETAILERS, FOOD					
SUPPORT SERVICES					
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
TRANSPORT					
WATER					

Company	Price	% Chg	Dividend	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
BANKS					
BREWERIES Pubs & REST					
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
FOOD MANUFACTURERS					
ENGINEERING & ELECT					
ELECTRONIC & ELECT					
HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT					
INSURANCE					
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RETAILERS, GENERAL					
RETAILERS, FOOD					
SUPPORT SERVICES					
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
TRANSPORT					
WATER					

Company	Price	% Chg	Dividend	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
BANKS					
BREWERIES Pubs & REST					
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
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LONGS (over 15 years)					
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)					
UNDATED					
INDEX-LINKED (on projected inflation of 5%)					

Company	Price	% Chg	Dividend	Yield	P/E
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Company	Price	% Chg	Dividend	Yield	P/E
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NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown on director Ang Lee's outstanding evocation of shifting morals in the 1970s, *The Ice Storm*

Brilliant blast of wintry home truths

Understandably, *The Ice Storm* may not rank high on people's lists of films to see in Quebec or upper New York State: they have been through enough ice storms of their own. But everyone else should rush to see a film so thoughtful, beautiful and funny, so observant of a particular life and time.

The clock is turned back to 1973 and the Thanksgiving weekend, late in November, in the cosy community of New Canaan, Connecticut. The 1970s suggest a riot of gaudy colours, wide collars, cravats, platform shoes, kaftans, patterned sweaters, love beads and chains. All these Ang Lee acknowledges: this director is as attuned to the social scene as ever he was in Taiwan, or indeed Jane Austen's England (the setting for his last film, *Sense and Sensibility*).

But in memory, *The Ice Storm* loses its colour collage. It becomes a thing of silver and grey, of reflecting surfaces: mirrors, glass walls in a spare, modern house; bare trees transformed by spikes of ice into clinking chandeliers. For the freezing look we must thank, in particular, the cinematographer Frederick Elmes, David Lynch's camera eyes on *Eraserhead*, *Blue Velvet* and *Wild at Heart*.

The ice storm that sweeps over New Canaan is symbolic, of course. Yet James Schamus's script, adapted from Rick Moody's novel, never thumps out its points. It moves gracefully between the parents and children all struggling to make sense of crumbling values at a time when the Watergate scandal looms and the suburbs finally discover free love. Ben Hood (meticulously played by Kevin Kline) enjoys a discreet affair with his frustrated neighbour (Sigourney Weaver, all sharp edges). Hood's wife (Joan Allen) bides her time reading *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. Their offspring do their own exploring: young Wendy (Christina Ricci) plays show and tell with the boys next door, while the older Paul (Tobey Maguire) passes out in Manhattan in hot pursuit of a wealthy schoolmate.

The disparate storylines, so carefully nurtured, start to fuse when the New Canaan adults join forces for a cocktail party. Car keys are placed in a bowl; the women are invited to fish out a set and bed their owner. In other hands this wife-swapping finale might have signalled unlimited romping. But Lee makes us feel the characters' pain, leading the way, if not to redemption, then to an uneasy truce between family members and in the larger war being fought between man and nature.

He is helped in this by superlative acting and a gifted design team that refuses to

The Ice Storm
Warner West End
15, 112 mins
Wonderfully observant social drama

The Woodlanders
Curzon West End
PG, 97 mins
Moving adaptation of Thomas Hardy

Flubber
Odeon West End
U, 93 mins
Frantic Disney comedy with Robin Williams

Clubbed to Death
Renoir, 18, 88 mins
More like bored to death

Ugetsu Monogatari
National Film Theatre
96 mins
Mizoguchi's masterpiece revived

treat the setting as an excuse to laugh at terrible fashions. The music also plays a part in making the film so mature and satisfying. You expect an onslaught of period songs; you get, in the main, a score by Mychael Danna that infiltrates a Balinese sound, cool and exotic, placing the characters' travails in a perspective and a landscape stretching far back in time. Poised, precise, emotionally resonant, this is well-behaved cinema par excellence.

A far different novel reaches the screen with *The Woodlanders*. First impressions of this Thomas Hardy adaptation are not very promising. So many rustics babble away in the woods that you wonder if this is some Monty Python sketch. Then the characters thin out and the film settles down to trace the thwarted love affairs of Grace, the timber merchant's daughter; Giles, the handsome woodsman; FitzPiers, the village doctor; Marty, the faithful peasant girl; and the widowed Mrs Charrmond, rich, charismatic and bored.

There is another key character — the woodland itself — and the director, Phil Agland, treats the landscape with the close scrutiny you would expect from a renowned maker of TV documentaries about China and Africa's rainforests. Everything was shot on location in the New Forest, cottage interiors and all. The production schedule was sliced into two, autumn and spring, to catch the seasons' changes. Agland rediscovered Hardy's book while living with pygmies in Cameroon; to him, Hardy's Wessex was a similar enclosed community, threatened by the outside world.

Agland and his script adapter, the playwright David Rudkin, bring an intense



Sigourney Weaver and Kevin Kline as the adulterous Connecticut couple in *The Ice Storm*, a piece of "poised, precise, emotionally resonant cinema par excellence"

physicality to their characters' lives. The chopping of wood, the downpours, the mud, the breath hanging in the cold air: all these we feel intensely. But without his actors, Emily Wolf especially, *The Woodlanders* might still seem little more than a novel with words removed and pictures added.

In her first screen role (parts in *The Full Monty* and *Photographing Fairies* came later), Wolf buttonholes our attention as the vulnerable Grace. Her initials are carved on a tree with Giles's, but their childhood romance finds no consummation: yielding to her father's lurch for social respectability, Grace marries the new village doctor (Cal MacAninch), who soon proves spectacularly unfaithful. Placed alongside the tremulous Wood, Rufus Sewell's Giles seems a mite wooden, although he cannot be beaten for brooding dark eyes. Tony Haygarth gives a well-rounded charac-

terisation of Melbury, Grace's ambitious father; and Jodhi May writes eloquent anguish from her small part as the drudge Marty, another sufferer on unrequited love. *The Woodlanders* remains literary cinema, but it is intelligent, beautifully shot by Ashley Rowe, and deeply felt.

Flubber is none of these things. But then, what do you expect from a Walt Disney comedy that takes a hit from the early 1960s, *The Absent-Minded Professor*, and hands it to Robin Williams? This is old-style family entertainment, hectic and silly, serviced by special effects of a sleekness undreamt of by the Disney team of 1961. Lots are needed, for "flubber", a contraction of "flying rubber", is a mischievous dollop of green goo, accidentally produced in Williams's laboratory, that defies gravity. It can make a car fly

and people bounce in the air. It can subdivide into a thousand globules, form a Busby Berkeley chorus line and shake a leg. It can also help the goodies — Williams and his university — defeat the baddies.

Such a volatile product needs plenty of gags to keep itself busy, and John Hughes's script, as directed by Les Mayfield, forgoes quality for quantity. Weak or not, the gags fly fast enough to occupy most children. The film is on rockier ground when it tries to engage people's feelings, and asks us to weep buckets over the demise of Williams's flying computer, called Weebo. Williams himself is relatively subdued; the supporting cast, headed by Marcia Gay Harden and Christopher McDonald, do what they can between the technical tricks.

Anyone seeking a new art-house delicacy is out of luck this week, for the French import *Clubbed to Death*,

directed by Yolande Zauberman, is in some ways more juvenile than *Flubber*. No flicker of mature thought can certainly be found in its dull love triangle, played among the rave clubs and drugged drifters of an urban wasteland on the edge of Paris. Drifting through this brave new world: Elodie Bouchez is our identification figure, but it is the cadaverous Beatrice Dalle, her rival in love, who grabs any attention going.

Although it might impress young post-romantics, *Clubbed to Death* is not a film we really need. Ugetsu *Monogatari* requires viewing every year or so. Kenji Mizoguchi's ghost story, made in 1953, keeps our faith in cinema alive. Such lyrical grace; such delicacy of emotion; no wonder this tale of a 16th-century potter lured from his responsibilities by a beautiful phantom has always been seen as a masterpiece.

'A fine drama'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

THE ICE STORM
Damian Samuels, 20: A brilliant look at suburban middle-class 1970s America.

LESLIE
Carl Clark, 19: Storm in a D-cup. Don't waste your money. Jon Gibson, 20: Ang Lee presents us with fine moments of farce and intense drama.

FLUBBER
Damian: A fun kids' movie that has the Disney formula written all over it. Leslie: A delight, kids will love it. Carl: It might be a comedy but this doesn't stop Marcia Gay



Harden delivering a most intelligent performance. Jon: It's about time Robin Williams made an adult film.

THE WOODLANDERS
Damian: An incredibly dull story told in a dull way. Leslie: A tedious waste of a couple of hours.

Carl: If you like your hunk with cross-eyes, Rufus Sewell is on hand. Wood is a disgrace. Jon: I'm sure Thomas Hardy fans will relish this. I, however, am more of a Robert Hardy fan and would rather stay in with a video of *All Creatures Great and Small*.

Close encounters of the mirth kind

MEN IN BLACK
Columbia TriStar, PG, 1997
BLOCKBUSTERS need not be devoid of wit or engaging characterisation, as this sassy and wayward romp shows. The men in black (Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith) are agents who monitor alien activity on the planet. Director Barry Sonnenfeld does not stint on the special effects — the screen rejoices in glop, goo and alien cockroaches — but until the finale prevents them upstaging the actors. One actor, Vincent D'Onofrio, actually needs upstaging: his malevolent hick is a prominent bore. A rental release.

THE BOY FROM MERCURY
Xscape, PG, 1996
A SLIGHT but very sweet Irish film about an alienated eight-year-old boy who decides that he comes from outer space. Writer-director Martin Duffy skilfully recreates a lonely child's life in the late 1950s: dad recently dead, mum remote, school oppressive. Only *Flash Gordon* serials provide any joy. Duffy's young star James Hickey brings a grave, wide-eyed charm to the show, and eclipses seasoned actors such as Rita Tushingham and Tom Courtenay. Available to rent.

GROSSE POINTE BLANK
Buena Vista, 15, 1997
A GOVERNMENT hit man tries to sort out his life during his high school reunion in Grosse Pointe, Detroit. On this peg, director George Armitage hangs an unusual and striking romantic comedy that jumps like a firecracker between different moods. The

"Intensely BEAUTIFUL... director Phil Agland seamlessly translates Hardy's favourite novel to the screen."

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"A POWERFUL performance from Emily Woolf"

RUFUS SEWELL EMILY WOOLF

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Sunday Telegraph

'Ashley Holland's warmly sung, nicely vainglorious Belcore'
Times

'Barry Banks' and Mary Piazas' singing is pure double cream... The tunes are divine... The audience loved it'
Evening Standard

'Andrew Shore's brilliant Dulcamara'
Evening Star said

'Barry Banks's Nemorino had the audience in rapt silence...'
Financial Times

'Michael Lloyd conducts a sparkling orchestral contribution'
Sunday Telegraph

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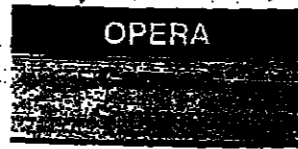
سكناء الامم

Toreadors fresh out of Moldova

Anyone who still thinks opera "elites" should have been here: Tuesday evening in Southend-on-Sea's Cliffs Pavilion packed by people of all ages looking for a good night out. And that is what they got. Indeed, if there was not an audience out there, the Moldovan National Opera would hardly be embarking on its fourth tour of Britain and Ireland, a month-long progress through 19 venues with *Carmen* and *Norma*.

Operatic life in the remote national capital of Chisinau may not be of the highest international standards, but this was an honest performance of Bizet's tricky masterpiece, a work with which grander companies have often come unstuck. It is old-fashioned, beginning with the use of the now-discredited recitatives, but then the company's French is probably better sung than spoken, and there are times when even Frenchmen would be grateful for the English surtitles.

Acting is of the hands-on-hips school, *Carmen*'s wig is a collector's item, and her *Habenera* is aimed at the men in the audience rather than those on stage. Yet Mihai Timofte's straightforward production is engaging: everything is clear except for the fatal stabbing at the close, so discreet here that many in the audience were surprised to see *Carmen* collapse. Irina Press's designs



evoked a hot and dusty Spain with simple economy. It helps that the company's music director, Alexandru Samoilă, is a seasoned professional. He took the prelude at speed, establishing exactly the right mood, and it was only to those recitatives that the music dragged. The orchestra showed subtle musicianship, at least as much as reduced strings and some not very top-quality instruments allowed. The chorus, too, is small.

But not many productions of *Carmen* boast four evenly-matched principals. The show is triple cast, and here the title role was sung by Gabriela Dragușin, a sultry mezzo borrowed from the neighbouring Romanian National Opera, who settled down to give a strong performance. Another Romanian, Mariana Colpos, disclosed a fresh soprano with body and colour, making her a very touching Micaëla.

As Don José, the Ukrainian Edward Srebnicki made up for his dramatic stiffness with ringing top notes. Petru Racovița was a firm-voiced Escamillo, and all the smaller roles were capably filled.

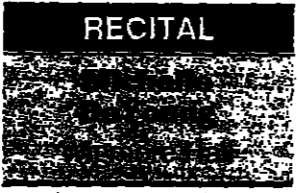
JOHN ALLISON

Loud and lusty

THE archetypal Girl of the Golden West, Michelle DeYoung was raised (as they say) in Colorado and California, and strides and strides the stage as if she were already singing her promised *Brick* for the Royal Opera. The vibrancy of her stage presence can be felt through to the back row and beyond; her burnished mezzo-soprano resonates, I am sure, quite as far as Oxford Circus.

This young yet already larger-than-life performer has made her name mainly in opera and in the concert repertoire, notably in Wagner and Mahler. So a Wigmore song recital debut: doubtless took careful preparation and not a little courage. Despite the charmless, repetitive-like piano playing of Kevin Murphy, she carried it off well enough, though she will need a rigorous coaching session or two in *chanson* and *Lieder* before she is able to convince the Wigmore's rather more discriminating audience.

Her opening Italian songs, by Cesti and Respighi, showed what the voice is made of. DeYoung's is a deep plush mezzo shot through with bright flames; and, as Respighi's *Nabie (Mist)* revealed, it enjoys rude health and faultless integration throughout its vast range. Although of substantial weight and mea-

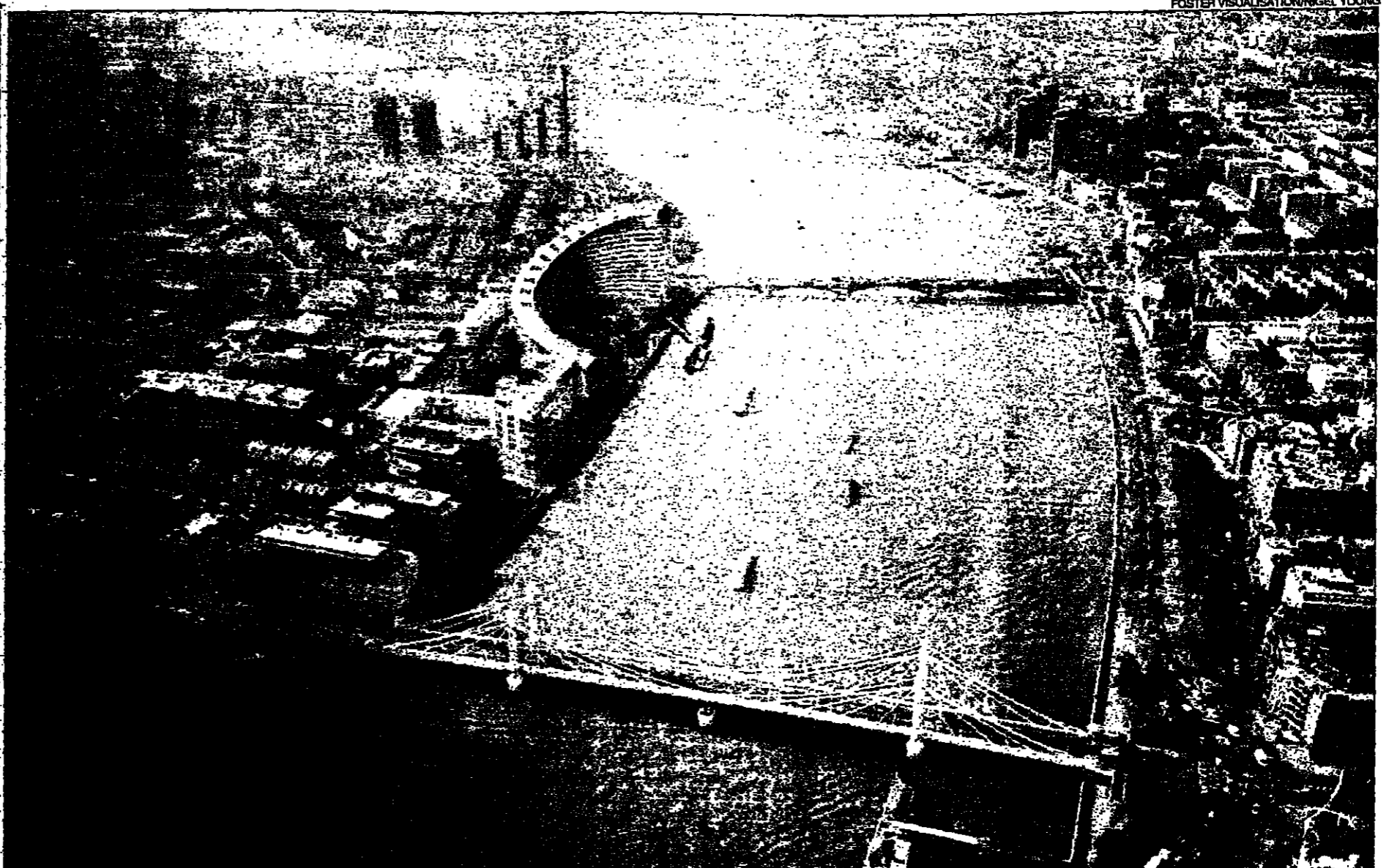


sure, the voice can move with ease and supple grace, thanks to meticulous breath control and intelligent use of words. Her Duparc *L'invitation au voyage* was as *luxe, calme et volupté* as anyone could have wished; her Poulenc *Banalités* robustly characterised.

But this music also flickers with half-lights, and is animated by suggestion as much as declaration. Neither DeYoung nor Murphy seemed to know it. Likewise, in her Schubert, DeYoung was in her element addressing thunder, the spheres and choirs of trumpets in the composer's grandiloquent setting of Klopstock's *Dem Unendlichen*. She lost her way, though, through the more finely-tuned nervous system of *Sohnsucht* and *Du bist die Ruh*.

Both performers were more at home in the four Mahler songs from *Das Knaben Wunderhorn*: the dark indigo of DeYoung's mezzo gave eloquent definition to a thoughtfully shaped *Urlicht*.

HILARY FINCH



A computerised view of the Thames looking west, showing how Foster's Albion Wharf would look. It is the curved building on the left between Albert and Battersea bridges

Shocking storeys

Sir Norman Foster wants to build a 277-apartment block of flats by the Thames in Central London. Marcus Binney finds the idea preposterous

Politicians tell us of their concern for the Thames. Here is a test as to whether any real policy exists to protect some of the finest river views in London. Sir Norman Foster, always quick to seize the main chance, has applied for permission to build a massive block of 277 apartments rising to 20 storeys just across the river from Chelsea Old Church.

It must be odds on that Foster will get his permission. A quarter of a mile up river, just round the bend, his great rival Lord Rogers has already received permission to build a 20-storey block of luxury apartments named Montevetro (and dubbed the Glass Mountain). That is now rising beside Battersea old church.

The south bank between Albert and Battersea bridges is one of the most badly botched stretches of river in the capital, all the more unforgivable as it is the backdrop to one of London's most delightful landmarks, Albert Bridge. First there is the dreadful ten-storey plum-coloured apartment block (Waterside Point), then Foster's own pallid office (with apartments above), for which few Londoners have a good word.

Foster's new building, Albion Wharf, is designed to stand next door, on the site of the hideous Majestic wine warehouse and an old London Transport bus station. These have been combined with adjoining derelict land to form a

single four-acre site which has been bought by Foster's client, Hutchison Whampoa (biggest shareholder in Orange mobile phones).

Foster's partner, Spencer de Grey, puts the argument for the new development vigorously. "This is a classic brown-field site, a far better place to build new housing than the Green Belt."

But to build three and four-storey houses as Wates have done west of Battersea Bridge is "almost criminal" according to one of Foster's project architects, Max Neal. De Grey draws a parallel with the scale of the Victorian mansion flats around Battersea Park which rise to five storeys. "I feel strongly that the generosity of the river allows one to go higher. In front of Albion Wharf there is 200 metres of open water. We are not taking anyone's light. It's a wasted opportunity if you don't maximise the view," he says.

De Grey recognises that the existing blocks along this stretch of the bank, including their own office, cast a north shadow over the Embankment walk which makes it less

attractive to use. So for Albion Wharf they propose a deep, slightly asymmetrical crescent — a Mediterranean-style zig-zag rising in steps under a sloping roof.

But does it have to be so high? De Grey says yes for two reasons. First, they want the density. These aren't large luxury flats, but mostly one or two bedroom apartments for ordinary Londoners. He concedes that Albion Wharf could be lower — but this, he says, could mean sacrificing the public element of the project. This is the triple-height raised ground floor with river cafes at either end and shops all around. The developers have agreed to put parking below ground, so outside it is all a pedestrian plaza, with a lush garden towards the river.

Rogers won permission for his 20-storey apartment block because he made a very seductive model which was left for weeks in the office of the Tory Environment Secretary John Gummer (who insisted on making all decisions on the river himself). Foster's drawings to date show nothing so appealing. The curve is

curiously awkward and lacks the lean athletic look usually associated with his work.

Even so, this should be a debate principally about planning policy rather than architectural quality or landmark buildings. For just as Rogers had set a precedent, Foster could set a still larger one.

If you stand on Albert Bridge and look downstream, you have one of the most unblemished and ravishing views in London. The embankment on both sides of a noble stretch of river is lined with large mature trees, almost as far as the eye can see.

Turn round and look upstream and the view is just as fine. But the Wandsworth front on the left is a mess, though a new tree-lined embankment could easily be achieved. At a push, it could be argued that Foster's steeply rising crescent will actually hide some of the eyesores, notably a clutch of ugly council flats, but unquestionably it sets a new almost giant scale on one of the best stretches of river in London.

Who will challenge the Foster proposal? The Labour MP

Gummer gave permission for the Rogers building, right beside a Grade I listed church, is bound to undermine hopes of reducing the size of the Foster building.

Clearly there are places on the river between Parliament and Tower Bridge where eight storeys and occasionally ten may be acceptable. But the Foster building will be in the same league as the massive Sea Containers block next to Blackfriars Bridge — and that is a monumental blot on the riverscape.

With his huge Millennium Tower, Foster showed he was prepared to listen, and ultimately to bow to public opinion. He has started the debate on the river in the most provocative possible way: now is the time for Londoners to find their voice.

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Space Newport

only a fraction of the hysteria they should have. In fact, the audience were more enthused by a witty new love-hate duet entitled *The Ballad of Tom Jones*, largely because local heroine Cerys Matthews of Catatonia provided guest vocals via pre-recorded video.

STEPHEN DALTON

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Ice Storm

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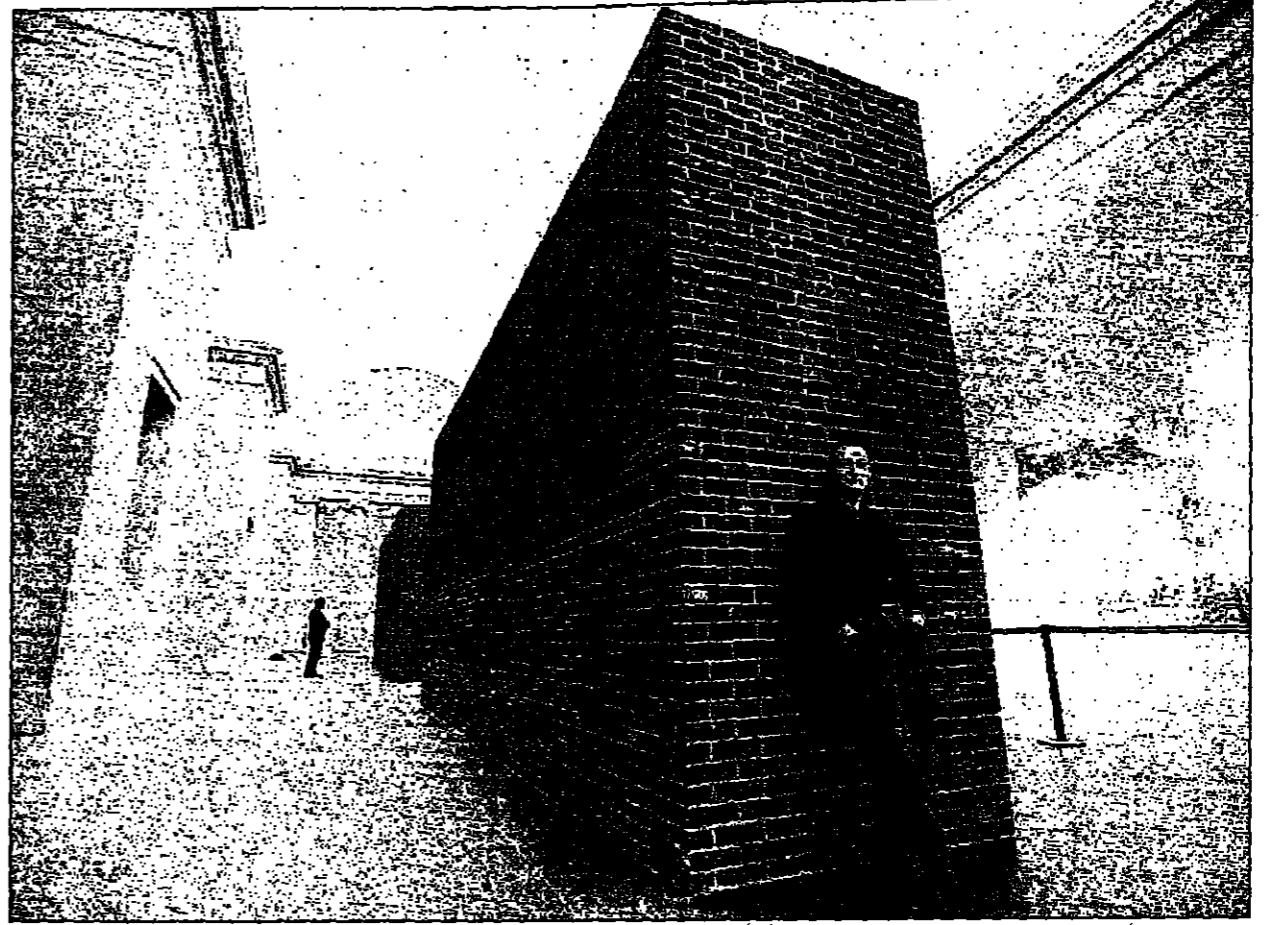
EMILY WALKER

ODERON

Isabel Carlisle on the Tate's controversial show of work by the Danish artist, Per Kirkeby

The monolith from 2001

Visitors to the Tate Gallery over the next four months may well be perplexed to encounter work by an artist they have never heard of. Those queuing down the central Duveen Galleries to get into the Bonnard show will do so in the company of sculpture and paintings by Per Kirkeby, Denmark's greatest living artist.



Per Kirkeby and his Brick Work, the Tate Gallery's latest contentious venture into the world of building materials

Flak has already been flying in the press around the brick walls that Kirkeby has constructed in the furthest of the three galleries. Inevitably comparisons have been made with the hoo-ha of 1972 when part of the series Equivalent VIII by Carl Andre, an arrangement of firebricks was displayed on the floor of the Tate to a baffled public.

There is a common theme here, and it is not bricks. Instead it is the shock of encountering an object that has no obvious precedent or function. What Kirkeby has done is to cause a temporary piece of indoor architecture to be built out of Denmark's most commonly used building block.

The function of Brick Work is deliberately mysterious, but it does have a precedent. In Denmark almost every building is made of brick, even the churches and monasteries of the Middle Ages. Kirkeby himself grew up in the shadow of the modern Grundtvig Church, a monstrous pile of six million bricks on the outskirts of Copenhagen with a facade like a 1930s radio set.

There is something dead and tomb-like about the piece? It is a struggle to relate this blind, brooding presence to the six canvases that have been hung in the recesses of the Duveen gallery walls on either side. Each painting has acquired an extra intensity through being effectively enclosed in a separate side chapel. They are huge works,

loft or more high, with an organic sensuousness of abstract form and colour that has been built up in layers of oils and then scraped down and etched over in scribbles made

palette knife as much as the brush. In Withdrawn from the World the courses of a brick wall show through the yellow background paint, in what started as a gold-leaf effect. Canyons have been opened up through smeared blocks of grey and brown, while the black overwriting resembles geological strata with fissures and bands that give the picture its superficial depth.

With all the paintings one can penetrate so far and no further. There is, metaphorically, a brick wall concealed at the back of each one, masked by the chaotic handling of the paint which throws up the likenesses of surreal living beings, river deltas, tumbling rocks, forests and pools of blood. Kirkeby explains these works by saying: "The Earth is always trembling. It may swallow you up, but it also has

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

Scottish Opera's new production of Così fan tutti, Mozart's dan-edged comedy of obsession put in the first century, precedes Claire Kubler and Michelle Watson sing the roles of the Italian sisters with Ian Paton and Peter Maclean as the disenchanted lovers.



Yuri Bashmet plays with the Halle in Manchester

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

MISS ROUGH'S WAR. Chloe Sulman in the title role of the wartime comedy, subtitled 'The Women Who Played the Smiley Games', from Patrick Hamilton's novel The Smiley Games.

NEW RELEASES

THE DELTA. Sexual odyssey of 16 months, teenagers, one teacher and one, one boy and one girl. Compelling low-budget drama from new director John Dahl.

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol) on release across the country

OPERA & BALLET

COLISEUM 0171 632 8007. ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA. The Magic Flute. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH 0171 416 8000. DAME JOYCE IS IMPROVED. In Her Majesty's Theatre, London.

COMEDY THEATRE

EDWARD FOX'S MASTERSHIP. In High Wycombe, London.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH 0171 416 8000. WESTSIDE DOWN THE WIND. In High Wycombe, London.

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Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'All', 'World', 'cara', 'Hostil', and 'CLASSICAL'.

All the world's a caravan

Two doyens of touring theatre have set off on the road again for their 35th season. Al Senter reports

As the high season of glamorous black tie banquets approaches — with Oliviers, Oscars and Baftas up for grabs over the next few months — it is easy to forget that there are companies of actors still dedicated to the life and art of the strolling player. While better-known names traipse up to the podium to receive their trophies, these unsung heroes maintain the tradition of small-scale touring, criss-crossing the UK for one-night stands in churches and village halls, arts centres and theatres from Halifax to Hastings.

Pre-eminent among these is Theatre Roundabout, aka husband-and-wife team Sylvia Read and William Fry. For 35 years they have toured Britain in their motor caravan, and even ventured into continental Europe and across America. And this week they set off again, with a new spring repertoire including *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Shadowlands*, both works cunningly filleted to suit a company of just two.

The sitting-room of their North London home is prepared for afternoon rehearsal. Fry, an imposing presence with an actor-laddish manner, takes centre-stage while his wife, a more fragile personality, offers an occasional interjection. Married since 1970, but professional partners from a decade earlier, they exchange beautifully-vowelled Darlings and Bless Yous.

Theatre Roundabout has both a secular and a spiritual arm. What might be called their lay activities — adaptations of such classic novels as *Vanity Fair*, *Jane Eyre* and *Barchester Towers* — are matched by their fervour for religious drama. Their first joint project was in 1960 on *A Strange Coming*, an Epiphany

play written by Read, a former associate of E. Martin Browne, himself a close collaborator with Eliot and a staunch advocate of religious theatre.

Quoting with approval a vicar friend's remark that "the opposite of faith is not doubt but certainty", they admit that their religious work can often upset the more fundamentalist of their audiences. Nevertheless, it can also have a profoundly positive effect on the public.

"We've never tried to convert people or to preach at audiences," Fry says. "Nor have we ever started from the assumption that Christianity was right and everybody else was wrong. What we want to do is to get people to think about things. We want to explore issues and break down hypocrisy and prejudice."

Their first adaptation, *Vanity Fair*, with a cast of 500 characters reduced to 26, even brought a truce between protesting German students and the authorities one night in the late Sixties.

"We were told that it was the first time for months that students and staff had actually sat down together," recalls Fry. "On the other hand, the show had been advertised as a ruthless exposure of bourgeois hypocrisy", which was both perfectly true and very much in keeping with the students' tastes."

Audiences have varied as much as the venues — and the warmth of the welcome. "We once played a very famous Scottish public school on a Saturday night and attendance for the senior boys was compulsory. Some of them were fresh from the rugby field and all of them were in a difficult mood. At first we had to struggle to make ourselves



If it's Tuesday this must be Polegate: Theatre Roundabout's Sylvia Read and William Fry share the cramped rehearsal/living/administration space in their trusty motor home

heard. So we stopped the show and simply looked at them. After an uneasy half a minute, they decided to come round. By the end of the show, they were stamping their feet and roaring their approval."

Theatre Roundabout was pioneering a style of stage narrative long before the RSC's *Nicholas Nickleby* made such a sensation, and before companies such as Shared Experience, uttered their first *Once Upon A Time*. Fry and Read share all the tasks of running the company — from adaptation to administration — but hire an outside director to oversee their productions. "You can get very self-indulgent," Read says. "We saw a truly dreadful play once at a religious drama festival and we asked the writer who was responsible

for the production. 'God is my director' was all he had to say."

Although they are coy about their ages, most of their contemporaries are contemplating retirement rather than pounding the motorways of Europe. Do they have any regrets?

"I think we both would have liked to have played *Shakespeare at the Old Vic*," Fry says. "Yet here we are, still doing something we love — a privilege which is granted to very few people in any walk of life."

● Theatre Roundabout's tour begins this week at Alceon Church, Polegate, Sussex (details of all venues and dates from 0181-455 4732), and includes a three-week season at the Pentameter Theatre, Hampstead (0171-435 3668) from Feb 10

Monologue for five players

CLAIRE DOWIE has been writing and performing her monologues throughout the 1990s, and unless I missed one they have all been to do with psychosocial turbulence. Her latest is no exception, but for the first time she has written what might loosely be called a play, ie, five speakers appear on the stage and a further two on a video. Again, for the first time she does not appear in one of her own works, although she directs it, and the awkward truth is that while her characters do sometimes listen and reply to one another and even hug, her writing has not yet escaped the monologue form.

Michael informs us that he loves his Dad and certainly doesn't want to spoil their nice relationship by mentioning such unimportant things that happened long ago. He does not go so far as to say that being screwed by his old man has had no bearing upon his choice of profession and virtual friendlessness, but this is implicit in the bravado of Jud Chariton's

Easy Access (for the boys) 1998 Hall

performance. What he gives us is flounce acting, punctuated by toothy smiles.

Dowie now proceeds to indicate Michael's continuing emotional dependence on his father (Peter Marinker), and the oedipal fright when a woman dislodges him. The device of juxtaposing a comment by A on a conversation B has previously had with C keeps the speed up, but recalls the kind of monologue where every event is immediately reflected upon. The use of the video to spill the nasty beans makes a neat climax, though neither Dowie nor Chariton makes Michael's smilingly villainous revenges look probable.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Hostilities on the home front

The chairs in the cramped dining room are brown, the screen behind which a dullest waitress lurks is brown, and, if the actors were not mixing their meals, the liquid in their bowls would be brown Windsor soup. This is the same drab English terrain Rattigan covered in *Separate Tables*; but in some ways harsher, uglier, as befits the period, which is 1943, and the author, who is Patrick Hamilton.

Theatregoers know Hamilton from *Rope* and *Gaslight*, but he was also the author of several darkish novels, including *The Slaves of Solitude*, which Richard Kane has now transformed into an unpretentiously absorbing play. As the original title suggests, it involves a dear old lady inwardly dreaming of love, an obnoxious bimp, a silent nobody who turns out to be a vaudeville actor, a German spinster long settled in Britain, and prim middle-aged Miss Roach. As Kane's rechristening suggests, it is also about the human habit of conflict.

At the start the voice of Pathe News is heard fruitfully evoking Leningrad and the awakening of the Russian bear. But the

Miss Roach's War Warehouse, Croydon

suburban boarding house where the action mainly occurs seems a safe haven, even though Mr Thwaites (Kane himself, with monocle and mean glint) likes to bait his fellow guests in annoyingly stilted prose. But then Miss Roach (Chloe Salaman, exuding nervy niceness) launches into two disruptive friendships. One is with an American officer (Norman Cooley) given to plying unlikely women with liquor and intimations of marriage. The other is Vicki (Helen Pearson), the German émigrée whom Miss Roach feels is being unfairly snubbed by the local patriots.

Why is she the more dangerous of the two? Not because she is a spy, as Thwaites maliciously claims. Hamilton and Kane shun both melodrama and period correctness, and refuse either to drama or sentimentalise her because of her national origins. Instead, they successively suggest she is an attractive victim, an unscrupulous vamp, a woman terri-

fied of poverty and loneliness, and someone who, as poor Roach declares in an unaccommodated fit of jealousy, might do quite well running a concentration camp. Jerry Lee's production (which moves to Wimbledon Studio on February 24) feels under-rehearsed and sometimes struggles to cope with an adaptation demanding sudden changes of location and shifts from dialogue to reverie. But it leaves you admiring writers who keep subverting your expectations and forcing you to rethink your judgments.

Nor is that the only aim. "They say this is the deadliest war in history," remarks Richard Tate's morose old actor. "Well, this is the deadliest house in the middle of it." The characters are plausible enough, but as relationships deteriorate, upper lips unstick, malice intensifies, and the good prove at best ineffective and at worst vengeful, they seem also to have some exemplary function. What hope for humanity when even the cross-section living above the Rosamund Tearooms finds it hard to keep the peace? A fair question. In 1943 and now.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Poetic Britten; Vivaldi for royalty; Moor to admire

CHORAL

Hilary Finch

■ BRITTEN
W.H. Auden settings
Langridge/Jones/Bedford
Collins Classics 1492
*** £11.49

STRIKE and you shall conquer? That was W.H. Auden's not entirely disinterested advice to a diffident Britten about his love life. And Britten responded by setting Auden's poem *Underneath an object without both as a duet, and as a confident and defiant solo*. In the latter form, the song receives an exuberant world premiere recording by Philip Langridge and Stuart Bedford as part of a centenary of Auden settings Collins Classics has assembled for the latest volume of its valuable Britten Edition.

In among *On This Island*, Langridge presents two further world premiere recordings: the wryly playful *The sun shines down and What's on your mind?*, in its new, sensuous expansiveness. The delight of this series is the company Britten keeps. Here, Lennox Berkeley's somewhat drab Auden settings (including, for the first time on disc, *Night covers up the rigid land and Lay your sleeping head*)

serve only to set the Britten into glorious, inspired relief. One composer seems to focus on the meaning, the other on the music of Auden's words; and Britten cherishes the heritage of English song just as Auden relishes the history of words. The disc ends with Della Jones's nicely understated performances of the Britten/Auden cabaret songs.

ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

■ VIVALDI
Concert for the Prince of Poland
Academy of Ancient Music/Manze
Harmonia Mundi HMI 98220 *** £15.49

ON March 21, 1740, the Royal Prince of Poland was entertained in lavish style at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice. A serenata was performed, and Vivaldi provided three new concertos and a sinfonia as entractes. That is the programme of this delightful new disc from the Academy of Ancient Music under its new co-director, Andrew Manze. The serenata is lost, but a couple more concertos from the earlier Op 8 set take its place here: *La Tempesta di Mare* (RV 254, where biting

antiphonal strings depict the stormy weather, and a sensuous *Il Piacer* (RV 180). The AAM has taken on a new lease of life under Manze, who inspires richly characterful but always stylish performances in the 1740 works too. In RV 540 the mellow tones of lute and viola d'amore are exploited, in RV 552 the echo effects are beautifully handled, and in RV 555 warbling recorders and chalumeaux combine with mandolins and theorbus to provide sheer bliss.

OPERA

John Higgins

■ VERDI
Otello
Giacomini/Manuguerra/Bordeaux National Orchestral Ensemble
Forlane 21874 (two CDs) *** £28.49

GIUSEPPE GIACOMINI is a tenor too often overlooked, especially by the record companies. His tiny number of entries in the catalogue gives

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

سكوا من الأصل

Gabriel Josipovici finds a worthy project undermined by an author who remains deeply suspicious of mirth

Don't kill the joke

Michael Sreech is the foremost scholar of Renaissance Humanism, whose recent splendid translation of Montaigne's *Essays* for Penguin brought Montaigne to many for whom he would otherwise have remained a mere name. He has now published a book on a fascinating topic, Christian laughter, and he has done so in a manner which is both learned and popular.

Written in a series of short (sometimes very short) chapters, and often quite personal in tone ("I first read it," he tells us of a learned Latin treatise, "in the handy little edition of Johannes Maier, Leyden, 1613"), it nevertheless does not flinch from leading its readers into the murky byways of biblical exegesis, pausing on "the way to acquaint us with the obscurer points of Renaissance hermeneutics, often by way of Latin, Greek and Hebrew words and idioms."

Despite its manifest qualities, though, the book left me profoundly dissatisfied. Both Sreech's strengths and his weaknesses are those of the man he clearly admires above all others, Erasmus. Erasmus, he tells us, was never really at home in Hebrew, and Sreech does not seem to be either. One place to go for an understanding of biblical laughter is Genesis 17, where Abraham, told that his 90-year-old wife Sarah will conceive, falls on his face "and laughed" (*yitzhak*),

whereupon God responds that the child will be called *yitzhak*, usually rendered Isaac. Sreech translates the Hebrew as "Isna-ak", which makes no sense.

This is a minor point. More serious is the fact that because Erasmus had no time for the period that preceded his own, Sreech doesn't either. "In the Renaissance," he writes, "Christian laughter swept into prominence." My own sense of the period is that, on the contrary, with the Renaissance and the Reformation a new and much more moralistic attitude to laughter displaced the far richer vein of medieval laughter, though that does not mean that this medieval laughter was anti-religious, as Bakhtin and his followers have argued.

To omit any mention of Chaucer, medieval drama on both sides of the Channel, and medieval art, is not simply to omit an important part of the history of Christian laughter; it is that in the practice of Chaucer and the late Middle Ages and in the scholarly exploration of that practice by V. A. Kolve, Michael Camille and many others, Sreech would have found much that might have made him question his conclusions.

No. This is to all intents and

purposes a study of two Renaissance writers, Erasmus and Rabelais, and of their attitude to Christianity and laughter. With laughter as with love, Christianity was from the start torn between two opposing views, both of which had sanction in the New Testament: Christianity is a religion of joy, it is the bringing of the Good

LAUGHTER AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS

By M. A. Sreech

Allen Lane, £30
ISBN 0 713 99012 0

News, yet at its centre is the figure of Christ on the cross. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice," said St Paul, but he also said, with equal feeling: "I have continual sorrow in my heart."

St Paul distrusted laughter and the Pauline strain in Christianity did so too: "What have we to do with tales and laughter?" wrote St Bernard. "I judge that not only extravagant jesting is to be condemned but all jesting."

On the other hand, laughter at those foolish enough to deny Christ was seen as legitimate: the mockers, who would, of course, ultimate-

ly be mocked, were fit targets for present laughter.

Then of course there was the whole problem of the Fool. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," began Psalm 14, but would it not be possible to see Christ as a holy fool, a fool for God and God as fool? And would that not be helpful in alerting us to the links between Christ and that other, classical, holy fool, the man who knew so much more than others because he alone knew that he did not know. Socrates?

On such paradoxes turns Erasmus's most famous work, *In Praise of Folly*, a book about which Sreech has written in the past and to which he returns with passion here. Yet Erasmus, like Calvin, was, in the end, deeply suspicious of laughter. It was all right to laugh, both felt, so long as you kept within the bounds of decency, so long as you did not let the laughter get out of hand.

Sreech tries to persuade us that this too was the attitude of Rabelais. I think he fails. Revealingly, he has to concentrate on Book IV of Rabelais's great prose work, and to stress first of all that laughter is laughter at the folly of others, and then that Pantagruel is a kind of Christian sage.

This is a common reading of Rabelais, but anyone who has opened the book and simply read the story of Gargantua (written second) and then of Pantagruel, his son (written first) will have felt that something startling and wonderful was taking place, as Rabelais improvised his way into a new form of prose fiction, and discovered how laughter and language go together. Imbued with a deeper humanism than Erasmus, Rabelais recognised that we can rely on no prior authority, not Latin, not scripture, not the Councils of the Church, not the dictates of kings and judges. Pantagruel's authority, as he successfully settles the dispute between the absurd lords, Baisecul and Humeevesne, depends on his ability to enter their crazy world and show himself master of it, not on his following his father's Humanist prescriptions.

Laughter is never innocent: it always depends on the gap perceived between nature and culture, how we are and how we might be. Yet it cannot be willed either. It is dangerous because it is unstable, unpredictable. Rabelais, like Chaucer, accepts instability, which means accepting fiction. St Bernard's "tales", Sreech, like Erasmus (and St Paul) can only feel at ease if he can explain laughter and reduce it, ultimately, to morality. His inability to escape that mindset casts a deep shadow over a worthy project.



Mockery: Bosch's *Christ Crowned with Thorns* (ca 1490 - 1500)

Dreams of reason

Imogen Stubbs celebrates the tales of the women blessed by restlessness

When I saw the title of this book I thought — that's what I've got! It's kind of like the menopause, only instead of hormone replacement therapy you're meant to put yellow Post-its everywhere affirming "there's no place like home". So when I read the seven-section headings with titles like "Longing to be Someone Else", and "Where I Was Always Meant to Be", I became certain that *The Virago Book of Wanderlust and Dreams* was a seven-step therapy book for people cursed by restlessness.

In fact it is an anthology of pieces about people blessed by restlessness. It is a book about yearning. The collection confines itself to 27 extracts from previously published works by women from vastly disparate backgrounds, writing across four centuries. However, all of the authors or heroines are united in their need to escape from the restrictions of their particular time or place. For Buchi Emecheta this means getting an education in order to become a "been-to" — a

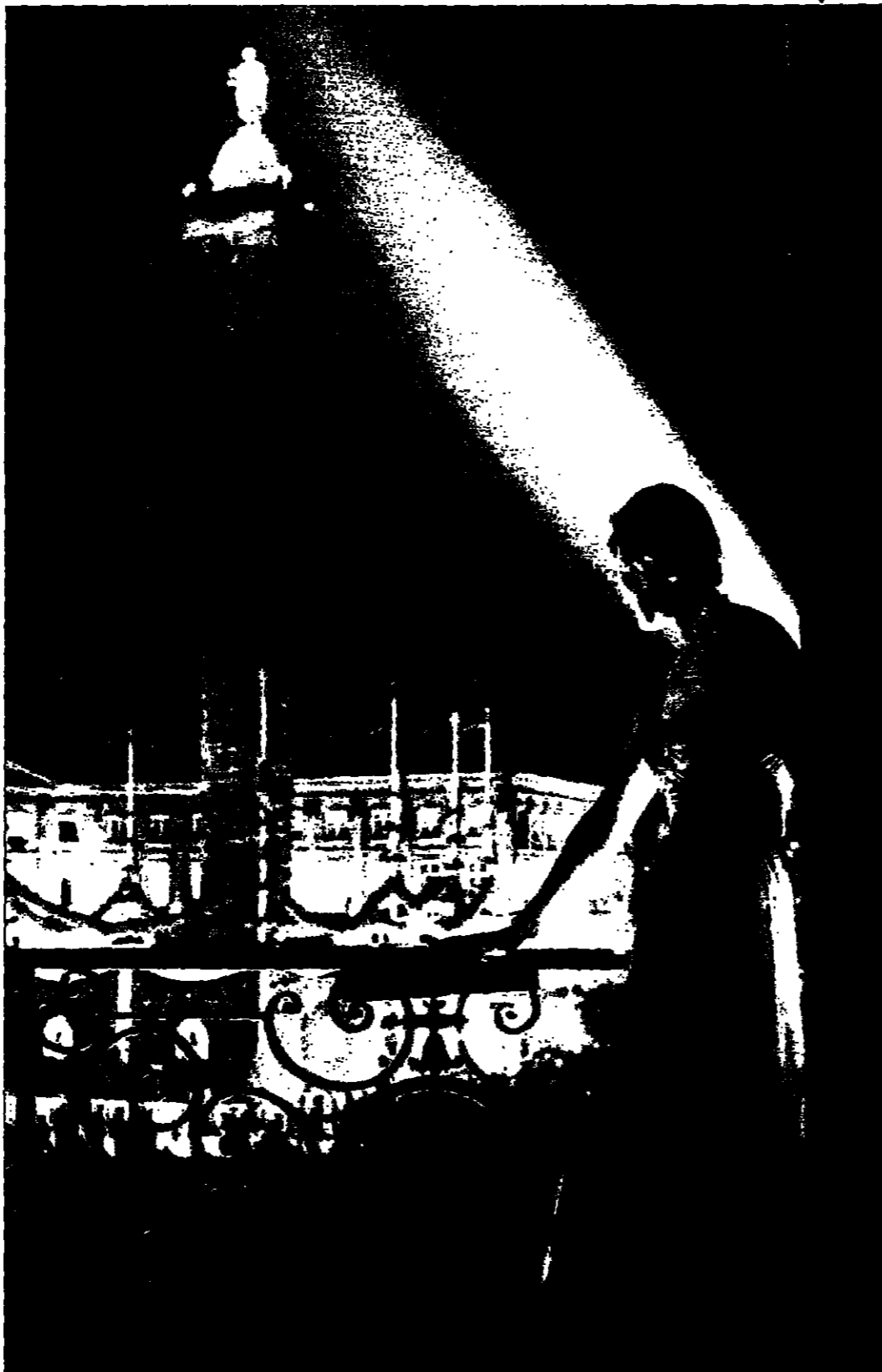
THE VIRAGO BOOK OF WANDERLUST AND DREAMS
Edited by Lisa St Aubin de Teran
Virago, £15.00
ISBN 1 85149 417 X

Nigerian who has visited London. For Dorothy Parker the flight is stylistic — from despair into humour.

The escapades are not adjudicated, but they are given a fairly hefty context. There is a section heading: a subtitle: the title of the book from which it is taken; and a short biography of the author. This is sometimes wonderfully bewildering, but sometimes the preamble creates an almost poetic summing-up of the content, as with Angela Carter's story of Baudelaire's syphilitic West Indian lover: "Ah! he be gone! She sighs! *Black Venus*".

There was a nameless woman who kept a journal during the Russian invasion of Berlin, and was "unique in recording, as it happened, the frenzy of rape". But when the Russians still had not arrived by the end of the harrowing extract, I felt a mixture of relief and I'm ashamed to say, bathos.

This could not be levelled at the astonishing story of Dona Catalina de Erauso, the 17th-century lesbian nun serial killer, last spotted with her "train of miles and the black slaves she owned and trafficked in, dressed as a man and calling herself Don Antonio de Erauso". There is a marvellously strange title to a Nina Simone song *Food for her Wings*. In this anthology the fodder takes many forms — for



Robert Doisneau's dream of the Place Vendôme, 1950 (from *Paris de Luxe*, Thames & Hudson, £42)

Elaine Dundy it is Paris in the Fifties; for Elizabeth von Arnim it is the memory of a garden; for the heroine in Emily Perkins's incredibly funny story about a secretary's disastrous affair with her boss, it is a shantied fantasy and the keys to his Saab. Janie, the widow in the piece by Zora Neale Hurston, journeys without going anywhere, by allowing herself to be reinvented by her new lover.

Some of the women, like Karen Blixen and Liane de Pougy (one of the last great French courtesans), seem to have made sense of their lives and are enlightening us — but mostly the characters are women

sharing their confusion. In *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept* Elizabeth Smart sees the poet George Barker step off the bus in Monterey — with his wife: "Behind her for whom I have waited so long, who has stalked so unbearably through my nighty dreams, fumbles with the tickets and the bags, and shuffles up to the event which too much anticipation has fingered to shreds. For afterward, it is all here."

Obviously, the joy of an anthology is that you are invited to peek through various keyholes and it is then up to you if you want to kick down any doors. I wanted to buy

Our Nig by Harriet Wilson on the strength of the subtitle alone: "Sketches from the life of a free black, in a two storey white house, North, showing that slavery's shadows fall even there, by 'our Nig'". *Wanderlust and Dreams* cost me a follow-up trip to the bookshop, but that is not the only measure of its value. It is always inspiring to dip into other peoples' dreams. Our nomadic instincts are not something to dread, but to respect and, actually, to cherish.

Imogen Stubbs is a contributor to *Women's New Travel Writing*, to be published in May.

Stephen Kuusisto was born prematurely in New Hampshire in 1955. Premature babies are likely to suffer from visual impairments, since the blood vessels of the retina form only during the last three months of pregnancy. Kuusisto was born with "retinopathy of prematurity". One eye sees as though through the chink of a closing door, the other is a wobbling jelly of grey light.

Kuusisto tells the story of his condition with great skill, conveying, through luminous descriptions, the peculiar feel of his peculiar darkness.

Kuusisto has two disabilities apart from his blindness, one of which he confesses to — namely, his reluctance to confess to disabilities. Kuusisto has wanted to be normal, to be an active participant in the games, studies and adventures of his contemporaries, while doing nothing to draw attention to the fact that he can read only with a telescope and see no surdly self-discipline, to his nose.

As a child he rode a bicycle; later he would walk or even run in city streets. He swimmers with women, while inwardly shrinking from them, acutely conscious of his swimming eyes which can never focus on the eyes of a lover. He drinks heavily, in Finnish style, and smokes marijuana with the boys. But in all things blindness quickly comes to cut off hope.

The story that Kuusisto tells is one of gradual attrition. Slowly his resistance is overcome, he bows to his fate, accepting first a white stick and then a guide dog. But in surrendering his pride he gains his freedom, emerging from frustration and pain with a kind of serenity. The conclusion of the book is so moving that I regretted all the more Kuusisto's third disability, to

Not in plain sight

Roger Scruton
PLANET OF THE BLIND
By Stephen Kuusisto
Faber, £9.99
ISBN 0 571 93617

which he does not confess: self-pity.

Of course, he has every excuse. But to write of something so terrible as blindness — and especially a blindness like Kuusisto's, which offers tantalising glimpses of sight — requires a sturdy self-discipline. Too many of Kuusisto's sentences contain the pronoun "I", affectionate glimpses of others are never more than glimpses, and, while he is a witty writer with wonderful turns of phrase, Kuusisto's flashes of comedy are more morbid than robust.

That said, I would recommend this book to all people who have the gift of sight and who have yet to thank God for it. Kuusisto knows enough of the visible world to describe and evoke its wonders — and they are wonders for him too. His yearning evocations of the sights that I take for granted often made me ashamed. And he writes with a truly educated pen, having absorbed his knowledge of the sensual world not from television but

from books — books read aloud, with the full weight of syntax delivered to his acute and listening ear.

Teachers, politicians, parents and employers all complain of the inability of young people to read, write, mount an argument or concentrate for more than five minutes on a problem. And yet nobody directs their criticism at the primary cause of this, which is television.

Take away sight, and you take away one of the greatest of life's joys; but you also take away the primary source of intellectual decay. To spend your leisure passively absorbing a stream of doctored images, all of them exciting and none of them part of your world, is to invite atrophy of the brain. There is no sign of this atrophy in Kuusisto who, although he must read books letter by letter, has a naturally cultivated mind, finding words and thoughts to draw his reader into his sphere of experience.

After decades of inactivity from our education system, it is only now that the catastrophe of the schools is being addressed. Surely David Blunkett too owes something to his blindness.

For the "darkness visible" that fills our living rooms has been permanently shut out from our world, as it has from the world of Stephen Kuusisto. Mr Blunkett may have to work harder to become acquainted with the written word; but he clearly has a greater understanding of its importance, and a greater motivation than the average Member of Parliament to learn about the world beyond the veil of images. The same is true of Kuusisto; and his book, which shows how wonderful is the gift of sight, is a vivid reminder of the near-universal misuse of it.

Their way of life lost

Elaine Feinstein

SHTETL

By Eva Hoffman
Secker & Warburg, £15.99
ISBN 0 436 20482 7



Hoffman: scrupulous

Bransk is a village of huts and sheds straggling alongside a flat, marshy river. For many centuries, its population was divided equally between rural Poles and unsophisticated, Yiddish speaking Jews; just one of the many similar villages — or "shtetls" — which once covered the Pale of Settlement and came to so brutal an end during the Second World War.

Eva Hoffman was born in Crows, after the war, to Jewish parents; in her earlier memoir, *Lost in Translation*, she remains nostalgic for the urban culture of a Polish childhood. She has no roots in a shtetl; nor is she seeking to recreate that lost world; but Bransk has little of the obsessive, physical particularity of Theo Richmond's *Kotvin*. As an investigator of rural Poland, however, she is ideal: scrupulous, poised and thoughtful.

She has a complex history to tell before she leads us into Bransk to ask questions about the murderous Nazi years. It was the liberality of Polish statutes which first brought Jews to live there in the 13th century, and it was the pluralism of ancient Poland which made them happy to remain. While Poland was prosperous, relations between Poles and Jews were harmonious. When the Ukrainians under Bogdan Chmelnicki invaded Poland in the 17th century there were cruel massacres of both Poles and Jews. The unnamed Jews who had no castles to defend them naturally fared much worse.

In the ebb and flow of Russian-Polish antagonism, the situation of an ethnic minority was unenviable. The joy shown by the Jewish population at the arrival of

Russian soldiers when Poland was split at the time of the Nazi-Soviet pact was resented by the Poles as disloyalty; yet how else could they have been expected to react?

As Eva Hoffman begins to question those who remember what happened once the Germans occupied Bransk, the responses she elicits chill the heart. A farmer, asked by Germans to carry corpses on his cart, speaks of travelling home through the river to wash off the blood, yet in doing so he expresses neither compassion nor horror. An anti-Semite jovially delights in the absence of Jews in present day Bransk. "Oh yes, a few of them tried to come back after the war, but one got killed and the rest got scared off."

Hoffman reminds us that all Poles were under threat of death if any of them were caught helping Jews, and that nevertheless more Poles are honoured as Righteous Gentiles in Jerusalem than those of any other nation. Many Polish lives must have been put at risk to save a single victim. None of us can know whether we would have put the lives of our own families in such peril.

Any analysis of the relationship between these two communities is controversial and, as the reaction to Claude Lanzmann's film masterpiece *Shoah* illustrated, likely to provoke anger. This scrupulous and thoughtful book confronts prejudice, history, and inexcusable heroism so sharply, human nature itself is brought uncomfortably into question.

stages of decay and desperation, financial and otherwise?

These second two books present a beguiling world of children's thinking as a way separate from adults. What sets them apart from most of their English counterparts is their author's use of language as it is spoken, and the creative possibilities within that. "I don't mean some lurid Joycean word-play, but a real life force in words. Where English novels are concerned I sometimes suspect the dead hand of a fearful editor, plus the fact that English English just isn't a modern language any more."

decline and never properly explained death in hospital. Frank has to grow up very fast as he adapts to life as a "half-orphan". Then he meets Alvy, son of screwed-up white-trash, and things really do change. There's massive energy in the language and some great lines, like when Frank's on the bus and describes chewing gum stuck on seats as "kids' Brailier". But while the tragedy at the edges adds to the intensity, and this is definitely a book worth reading, I had some problems with it. "The terrible title for a start, and the cute egg references throughout — they're a bit of sexual abuse thrown in for good measure. And must all the women, young and old, be so relentlessly portrayed as painted "stacked" slappers at various

A beguiling world of children's thinking

NEW FICTION

law into his own hands and escapes to Montana. The style is monochrome, the language bleak and there is very little to show the book is set in the present time, which is quite unusual.

Todd McEwan's third novel, *Arithmetic* (Cape, £9.99; ISBN 0 436 20480 0) is a little different. It's set in Kentucky. When Virgil Caudhill's brother Boyd is murdered, everyone knows who did it, so the tight-knit community calls for arms in the traditional way. Virgil takes the

a novel stretched out, it is well worth the time for the sheer energy of the humour. There are some great one-liners — loads more per page than most stuff out there.

Bruce Duffy's second novel *Last Comes The Egg* (Simon & Schuster, £15.99; ISBN 0 684 80883 8) begins as something really special. It's the

early Sixties. A 12-year-old boy, Frank, is riding in his parents' new car which his flamboyant mother has got his underachieving father to buy. The book segues into their life in a suburb. Frank's mother's

decline and never properly explained death in hospital. Frank has to grow up very fast as he adapts to life as a "half-orphan". Then he meets Alvy, son of screwed-up white-trash, and things really do change. There's massive energy in the language and some great lines, like when Frank's on

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Book reviews carried in *The Times* since the beginning of the year are available on our Internet site. See the "Most recent" links on <http://www.the-times.co.uk>

TANIA GLYDE

Where does Solzhenitsyn fit in his new Russia, asks Orlando Figes

From the Terror to the talk show

On December 12, 1961, on his way to deliver the manuscript of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, the Moscow offices of the journal *Novyi Mir*, the then unknown writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn paused by Pushkin's statue to beg for support and promised he would follow in the poet's path. It was, as he recalled, "a sort of prayer".

More than any other writer this century, Solzhenitsyn has carried on that great tradition, stretching back to Pushkin, of the Russian writer as the conscience of the nation, a speaker of the truth against lying governments. He was perhaps the first in that tradition to succeed. Pushkin, like countless other Russian writers, was crushed by the court and conventions of his day. But Solzhenitsyn played a discrete part in the downfall of the Soviet regime. *The Gulag Archipelago* arguably did more than any other book to undermine the moral claims of communism and the faith of communists throughout the world.

As the subtitle of D. M. Thomas's new biography suggests, it is the story of the writer's life and times, written with the verve of an exciting thriller, rather than a study of his ideas and works in their intellectual context.

Born in southern Russia in 1918, Solzhenitsyn was a model student of the Terror years. A fervent Leninist, he was awarded a Stalin scholarship to study physics and looked set for promotion through the army ranks — until his arrest in 1945 for some youthful criticisms of the Government.

Eight years in the Gulag shaped the rest of Solzhenitsyn's life. His whole psyche was permanently scarred by the experience (20 years after his release he still slept with his camp jacket wrapped around his pillow). It set him on the path towards conversion to Christianity, Slavophilism, and violent anti-socialism, as the Tsarist penal camps had done to Dostoevsky. Thomas leaves the how and the when of this unclear, but one can hardly blame him. Even Khrushchev failed to spot the renegade when he authorised the publication of *Ivan Denisovich*.

Without the clampdown of the Brezhnev years, Solzhenitsyn might possibly have remained in the liberal camp of Sakharov et al. Thomas doesn't say. But, in any case, KGB harassment of Solzhenitsyn (they even tried to poison him) and the confiscation of *The Gulag Archipelago* led, in 1974, to his deportation from the Soviet Union — whereupon he condemned the liberal West just as violently as he attacked communism. Most of us were glad to see the back of him when he returned to Russia in 1994.

Not so D. M. Thomas. His Solzhenitsyn

ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN
A Century of his Life
By D. M. Thomas
Little Brown, £20
ISBN 0 316 64227 7

is, for all his faults, a monumental hero and, in the name of anti-communism, Thomas is prepared to excuse the authoritarian "militarism and anti-Semitism which led most of the liberal dissidents to abandon Solzhenitsyn in the Seventies. Thomas says that this is to get the great man wrong, and he makes an ill-informed attempt to portray Solzhenitsyn as a "green". But all the elements of his ideology — the condemnation of the Enlightenment, the messianic belief in Orthodoxy, the idealisation of the Russian

newly opened KGB files, and manages to bring the man to life in a way that no one else has ever done before. Perhaps there are times when it takes a writer to understand another.

Thomas is good on Solzhenitsyn's women. Solzhenitsyn's first wife, Natasha, haunts the book. She was his victim just as he was the victim of the KGB. Solzhenitsyn bullied her, worked her to the bone, and then dumped her as soon as false laid younger women at his feet. When she tried to kill herself, all he could say was: "How dare she do this to me?"

Equally impressive is Thomas's analysis of Solzhenitsyn's declining creativity. Solzhenitsyn sees himself as Tolstoy's heir. Since *The Gulag Archipelago* he has immersed himself in *The Red Wheel*, a multi-volume novelistic history of the First World War and the Russian Revolution similar in conception to *War and Peace* but without a Natasha or a Pierre. It was from the publication of August 1914 in 1972 that Solzhenitsyn began to lose his readers and his reputation as a novelist. But, as Thomas argues, Solzhenitsyn never was a creative writer, in the sense of drawing from one's own sub-consciousness. "He could never have invented an *Inferno*, as Dante did; he didn't need to, because this Russian *Inferno* existed."

But what Thomas captures best of all is Solzhenitsyn's monolithism. The Leninist fanatic became just as zealous in his anti-Leninism. There is a theory, which Thomas reinforces, that Solzhenitsyn's portrait of Lenin in Zurich was in fact a portrait of himself. Both men were driven by self-belief and dogma. Both showed contempt for anyone who did not serve their cause.

Solzhenitsyn is probably the last in that great tradition of Russian writers stretching back to Pushkin. After his return to Yeltsin's Russia, he addressed the nation in his own weekly television show. But Russians had grown tired of ideology, even Solzhenitsyn's, and his sort of literature seemed out of date. For lack of viewers, the programme was soon axed to clear more airtime for Western soap operas and pop videos.

Perhaps it's just as well that the writer in Russia is no longer burdened with the conscience of the people: both can now get on with their normal lives. Russian literature will have to find a new way — outside politics. But will it be as good?

Orlando Figes is the author of *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891-1924* (Pimlico, £12.50), which won the NCR Prize for Non-Fiction, the Wolfson History Prize, and the WH Smith Literary Award.



peasant, the xenophobia and Judaeophobia — are derived from the 19th-century Slavophiles. Solzhenitsyn is Dostoevsky's ghost.

This is perhaps the prime example where a better understanding of the intellectual context might have made for a more balanced portrait of this Russian writer. For this reason, Thomas's biography is not quite as authoritative as Michael Scammell's huge life of 1984. But it does bring the story up to date, using



Give peace a chance

Guess the author of the "photo-epigram" on the left, written in May 1940 as the Battle of Britain began. Dr Guebbels? No: Bertolt Brecht. It is one of some 85 verses inspired by wartime news photographs he assembled in a scrapbook he called *Kriegsbilder*, or *War Primer* (Libris, £30).

The theme of Churchill's "V" poster reflects the Soviet party line of neutrality between Axis and Allies. But long after June 1941, Brecht was still evenhanded in his contempt for Nazi and Western leaders. Though an exile, Brecht observed the war from a safe distance: Sweden, Finland and, after 1941, the United States. His cynicism, even nihilism, is always startling, often distasteful and utterly typical.

Another theme of these quatrains, published here for the first time in English, is pacifism: the best lines evoke the suffering of the "little man". But this offended the East German authorities, and the edition that appeared in 1955 had been censored.

Apart from its ideology, *War Primer* is strikingly original: it anticipates pop art or *Private Eye* covers more than any poet. John Willen's afterward mentions debts to Kipling's war ditties and John Heartfield's photomontages. But Brecht, born 100 years ago this month, invented the idea of the picture caption as poetry, and brought it to a level of satirical brilliance comparable to the lyrics in *The Threepenny Opera*. Indeed, Paul Dessau used *War Primer* while composing his choral work, *German Miserere*.

However, Brecht's latest biographer John Fugeli reckons that Brecht actually wrote only a fraction of his dramatic oeuvre. Is it certain that he, not his female collective, Margarete Steffin and Ruth Bebra, wrote *War Primer*? Willen is silent on this point. To adapt Beethoven's comment on Mozart's *Requiem*: if Brecht was not the author of *War Primer*, the author was a Brecht.

DANIEL JOHNSON

Gang law is something I can understand. With man-eaters I've excellent relations. I've had the killers feeding from my hand. I am the man to save civilization.

life lost

This is a curious book, constructed out of several diverse components and thought-provoking, unfortunately it just as often reads like a job-lot of the author's thoughts on the Great Issues of Our Time.

Ignatieff has written extensively on nationalism and ethnic conflict, and his deservedly acclaimed television series *Blood and Belonging* did much to illustrate the roots and results of the ragged tribal wars that have erupted in the post-Cold War era. *The Warrior's Honour* — and there is precious little on the front lines of Bosnia and Rwanda — is Ignatieff's attempt to examine the obligations of moral citizenship in a world where ethnocide, even genocide, is now beamed into every home that has a television set.

It includes a travelogue around the world's ghastliest, or in some ways perhaps most atrocious, datelines such as Bosnia, Kurdistan and Rwanda. That is preceded by an often turgid introductory essay on the role of the media in conditioning our responses to disaster. This seems a verbose

Morals and murder in the global village

Adam LeBar on the trouble with trying not to take sides

THE WARRIOR'S HONOUR
By Michael Ignatieff
Chatto & Windus, £9.99
ISBN 0 7011 6324 0

reworking of Marshall McLuhan's theory of the global village that adds little new.

Tacked on at the end of the book is a history of the Red Cross that has a concise narrative outlining that organisation's utter failure to condemn the Holocaust, together with some observations about the role of international relief organisations in the new wars fought by militias and gangsters, where there is often no respect for neutrality or humanitarianism.

Ignatieff is perceptive on the Red Cross, and the moral ambiguity its fieldworkers face when bringing aid to outlaw states. There is scope for plenty of interesting material here, and these are serious issues: what can we, the West, realistically do to bring lasting peace to Chechnya, for example? Quite possibly, nothing. But then why are the Chechens less deserving of our attentions than the Bosnian Muslims?

Sadly the book cries out for some decent, hard-hitting editing. It too often sinks into pontification without any conclusion. For example: "The culture of the visual image, so a Marxist would argue, moralised the relation between viewer and sufferer as an eternal moment of empathy



outside history," claims Ignatieff in his opening chapter on the ethics of television. Well, maybe. But what does this sentence actually mean? Ignatieff gets into his stride when writing about real

places and those who live there. He is insightful on Yugoslavia and its break-up, and the process by which a Serbian soldier with whom he spends a night in a bunker had "in the space of three years... been delivered back 400 years to the late feudal world before the European nation-state began."

The strongest material in Ignatieff's book is in the chapter entitled "The Seductiveness of Moral Disgust". Ignatieff takes a trip with the former UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros Ghali around Africa. The timing is prescient. The Bosnian town of Srebrenica, site of the international community's greatest shame, has just fallen.

Even as the plush executive jet carrying the Secretary General flies over the plains of Africa, thousands of Muslim men are being taken away for slaughter by the Bosnian Serbs. Why did the UN not protect its own "safe haven"? "We are not able to intervene on one side," the mandate does not allow it," says Ghali.

For UN bureaucrats such as Ghali too, as well as warriors, there is no honour in war.

A corpse after courtship

DOROTHY L SAYERS gave up writing Lord Peter Wimsey novels once she had steered the aristocratic detective through a tempestuous literary courtship and marriage to her proudly independent alter ego, Harriet Vane. After *Bushman's Honeycomb* comes silence: only one short story gives a glimpse of them as parents. However, in July 1936 it seems that DLS abandoned a Wimsey work in progress, and when a fragment turned up in her agent's safe it was entrusted to Jill Paton Walsh to finish.

Beady-eyed Wimseyphiles should be reassured that this is a safe pair of hands. Sayers was no hack: although her heavier work is more revered, she put into the Vane-Wimsey love story all the difficult passion of her own life, all her ideals of honour and of a noble obligation rescuing the class system from hopeless corruption.

Fulton Walsh's account of the first half-year of Lord Peter's marriage is miraculously right: catching precisely the tone of the relationship: moving, understated, nery, full of lines from Donne and punctiliously (actually, a bit ludicrously) scrupulous of honour.

The other major character is the year 1936. George V has died, the Abdication Crisis is brewing, dictators rising in Europe, a new war threatening. Our 1998 author cannot resist intensifying the historical perspective: who could? Crowds drift through the streets in black, Wimsey retrieves secret papers from the wayward King and spots Wallis, Harriet wears a ghastly pleated stiff collar with horrid 1930s elegance.

Oh yes, and the murder: it occurs among the reatland an-

Libby Purves
THRONES, DOMINATIONS
By Dorothy L. Sayers and Jill Paton Walsh
Hodder & Stoughton, £14.99
ISBN 0 340 8455 0

grumpily noted that the divine Dorothy would have given us a corpse in a bath by now, preferably wearing a gold pince-nez.

Never mind. It comes out splendidly, the spectre of DLS at last weighing in with plenty of discreetly Wimseyified inquiries involving faithful and amazingly intelligent members of the servant class, a second corpse twisting through the London sewers to discovery, and a thrilling denouement under a theatre echoing *Phantom of the Opera*. As Wimsey would say, *Placet, domina*.

The New Yorker wants a word in your ear

CURIOUS though this might seem, being read to by someone else is often more taxing than reading a story for yourself. Your eyes cannot skim over a paragraph, taking in words by osmosis: you are swept along by another's current.

Bear that in mind when you listen to *The New Yorker Out Loud* (Mercury Records, £14.99), an audiobook of short stories, the first to be released by the magazine. All of the tales that are here read aloud — there are five — were originally published therein.

Listening to them, though taxing, brings a new dimension to these tales, a new flavour. When the author himself is reading aloud, listening places you at his elbow and when the author is John Updike or Ian McEwan, the experience is creamy.

Take Updike first, whose story, *New York Girl*, provides a half hour's worth of listening as good as anything by Miles Davis or Jacques Brel. A married salesman from Buffalo comes to New York and meets a woman whose hair has "the cedary fragrance of pencil shavings" and whose hips are "so wide she walks with a see-sawing hunch".

They become lovers but never bridge the distance that separates New York from Buffalo. It is a world-weary tale, told by Updike in his own not-quite-avuncular voice. Nothing happens: nothing is meant to happen. But the listener is drawn to detail



"I prefer not to be called a writer. Miss Malpiedusa. I am a teller of tales."

much more gracefully than he would be on a page.

McEwan, too, reads his own story *Us or Me*, taken from the opening of his novel *Enduring Love*, and it sounds just as good as Updike's. A disconcerting story, it tells of how a hot-air balloon invades the Chilterns, interrupting the narrator's picnic with his wife. A man falls to his death, and the narrator, "the world's most complicated simpleton", finds that his life is changed forever.

Death provides the theme, also, for the only outright dud in this collection, Martin Amis's *What Happened to Me on My Holiday*. A slipshod reminiscence, it is riddled with phrases of excruciating banality. Amis, typically, has failed to recognise this. The result is indigestible, as is the rasping Amis voice. My advice: fast-forward to the next story.

Such action would take you straight to *Maths Class* by Seamus Deane, read here by the Irish actor Gabriel Byrne. It is a first-rate satire of a sadistic Jesuit teacher and reminded me of that Rowan Atkinson skit on television in which the comic takes roll-call. Deane's tale, of course, is more bleak. Jesuits, on the whole, are not funny. I know that from personal experience.

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Bargains of the week — learn to tango in Dorset or book a French villa with a pool for the World Cup



A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and further afield, many at bargain prices:

BRITAIN

THE thrill of the race is often secondary to the atmosphere of the Cheltenham Festival, which celebrates its centenary this year. For a bargain break, Puntin's is offering four-night self-catering stays at nearby Blean Sands from March 16 for £99, based on two sharing with transfers and tickets. Details: 0990 331190.

DO you have a basic knowledge of tango or a slow foxtro? Those who love to dance but feel a little rusty can brush up their steps at Warmwell Leisure Resort in Dorset from February 21-28. Parkdance Holidays has a week-long sequence dancing break, with prices starting at

£99 in a lodge sleeping four: lessons £20 extra. Details: 0191-224 0500.

FEBRUARY is bargain month for hotel breaks. Embassy Leisure Breaks has prices starting at £34 for a stay in West London, as well as cheap nights at other capital properties. Details: 0345 581 811.

THE Hotel Directory also has a list of February deals in London, such as the three-star Central Park in Bayswater at £88 for two nights (third night free). Details: 0181-770 0123.

LANGUAGE will be no barrier to those learning French, German or Spanish at the YHA in Canterbury. Budget breaks cost £9.75 a night accommodation and £13.50 for a two-hour language session (£60 for two-hour sessions over five days). Details: 01227 462911.

DRAWING and watercolours may be more suited to those planning a new hobby. Countrywide Holidays is hosting a four-night break in a Peak District guesthouse from March 9 for £177, to include all meals and the course itself. Details: 0161-446 2226.

EUROPE

WHILE the British have problems over a high-speed rail link to the Channel Tunnel, the Belgians have finished theirs. Brussels is now just two hours and 40 minutes away by Eurostar and Leisure Direction has one-night breaks in a four-star hotel close to the Grand Place from £94, including rail tickets. Details: 0181-324 3030.

THE Hotel Baglioni in Florence has a roof garden. The restaurant also has panoramic views of the city. To enjoy both fly on February 15 with Citalia, departing Gatwick to Pisa for three nights. The £371 price tag includes breakfast and transfers. Details: 0181-686 5533.

EXTRA nights for £19 can be had for those booking a three-night break in Cyprus with Goldenjoy Holidays. The package, at £199, also includes scheduled flights and car hire, valid until February 25. Details: 0171-794 9818.

HURGHADA is a huge watersports centre in Egypt and Regal Holidays has several February and March

offers. Bed and breakfast at the Ambassador hotel, for example, costs £249 for departures on February 6, 13 and 20. Across the Red Sea at Sharm-el-Sheik, B&B at the Tivoli Divers Rooms is even cheaper, at £219, leaving February 12 or 19. Details: 01353 778096.

TENERIFE is renowned for walking holidays, its forested hillsides a chasm away from the developed resorts. Exodus has a seven-night holiday departing on February 27 from £580 to include five picnics and six evening meals. Details: 0181-675 5550.

BUT if you really do want a beach break in the Canary Islands, Sunset Holidays has several last-minute bargains to Spain and the islands, including Los Delfines studios in Lanzarote for two weeks, leaving Gatwick on February 19, for £299. Details: 0541 538899.

VILLAS with pools in France are selling out fast in World Cup weeks this year, particularly in the south. Something Special still has a few available with prices starting at £675 per week for a five-bedroom manor house to sleep 12. Details: 01992 557711.



THE Stratosphere Tower is the latest addition to the Las Vegas skyline. Save your gambling money by booking a cheap seven-night package through Worldchoice. Flights, accommodation and a car will cost £359 for departures on Monday from Gatwick. Details: 0990 000888.

LONG-HAUL

THE volume of holiday bargains to the Far East is becoming a flood, with special deals to Hong Kong the latest offer from Qantas Holidays. Three-night packages including flights, accommodation and transfers cost £333 until March 22; extra nights, £27. Details: 0990 673464.

FLIGHT-ONLY deals to the Far East are also common with Singapore from £372 and Jakarta £382 through Quest Worldwide. Valid until March 24. Details: 0181-547 3322.

WHILE the Far East may be in vogue for discounted offers, a one-way ticket to Perth in Western Australia for £149 also constitutes a huge bargain. Austrel quotes the fare for Gatwick departures on February 16 and 23. Details: 0171-734 7755.

THIRTEEN nights on an escorted tour of South Africa allows time to visit the Drakensberg mountains, the Kruger National Park and Soweto with British Airways Holidays. A ride on the Outeniqua steam train is also included in the £1,745 fare, as is all

accommodation, and internal flights. Departing April 29. Details: 01293 725402.

BARBADOS promises to be the best Test in the England v West Indies series. Calypso Gold also guarantees match tickets for the two-week trip leaving Manchester on March 4, or Gatwick on March 8. Prices start at £999 inclusive. Details: 0181-977 9655.

CRUISING bargains appear to be a year-round event, with Page & Moy offering two weeks in the Caribbean, leaving March 6, 13 or 30 from £539 for the second week — brochure prices for the first. Details: 0116 250 7122.

All prices are per person and based on two sharing a room, unless otherwise stated.

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RACING: JOCKEYS MAKE PLANS TO RESUME CAREERS

Aspell back on track with New Rising

THE horse is called New Rising, and Leighton Aspell must hope that a dose of resurrection is not misplaced. Aspell, youngest of the three jockeys whose arrest last week shocked the racing world, today becomes the first to resume his trade in a novice hurdle at Towcester.

By CHRIS MCCRATH
The racing community is a very close one. Christopher Foster, the Jockey Club executive director, said after yesterday's meeting: "It is understandable that strong emotions were aroused by the events of the past week."

On emerging into Portman Square, Caulfield shepherded the riders through a media scrum that would "The jockeys are relieved and pleased that the licensing committee has reconsidered its original decision," he said.

That hope now rests with the promising conditional, Aspell. New Rising, who shaped nicely on his only start, is trained by Josh Clifford, his employer and source of many indignant endorsements over recent days.

Caulfield added: "One thing these guys can handle is pressure. They would be more nervous about a situation such as today's than being on the racecourse. It will be a relief to be back among friendly faces."



Cleared to ride: Gallagher, top, Aspell, left, and Osborne at the Jockey Club yesterday

TABLE TENNIS

England prepare for second chance

By RICHARD EATON

ENGLAND have an unexpected chance tonight to qualify for a place in the play-off for promotion to the super division of the European League. A one-off encounter with Greece at Great Yarmouth will decide which team goes through to take on the Czech Republic in the play-off and, although England face a daunting task, it is a future that they are perhaps fortunate to have at all.

Although granted a reprieve, England remain underdogs. Matthew Syed, the Commonwealth champion, and Carl Prean, the former national champion, are taking part, but Alex Perry, their No.3, has a shoulder injury and Terry Young, 19, will make his European League debut.

Greece, aggrieved at having lost the spoils of their first-leg victory and therefore lacking nothing in terms of motivation, have two players - Kalinikos Kreanga, ranked No.15 in the world, and Ntariel Tsiokas, ranked No.64 - capable of beating anyone on their day.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Edwards to remain at Bradford

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

WIGAN WARRIORS have had an audacious bid to resign Shaun Edwards rejected by Bradford Bulls, for whom the Great Britain scrum half, who has been injured, has still to play a game following his move from London Broncos last October.

Before Edwards, 31, left Wigan to join the London club last April, he had amassed 39 winners' medals in various competitions in his 14 years at Central Park during which he made 467 appearances.

"We made an official approach but Bradford have rebuffed us. That's now the end of the matter as far as we are concerned," Mike Nolan, the Wigan chairman, said.

Tony Smith, Edwards's successor as Wigan's scrum half, has a hamstring injury, and, along with Denis Betts and Nigel Wright, will miss Wigan's first competitive match of the new season, against Keighley Cougars in the fourth round of the Silk Cup Challenge Cup on Sunday, February 15.

Next Sunday, the 11 first division clubs begin a league programme that will culminate in an Australian-style top-five play-off and final at the McAlpine Stadium, Huddersfield, where there are still voices arguing the lower division teams to revert to a winter season.

TOWCESTER

3.10 GEOFFREY LYDALL MEMORIAL NOVICES CHASE (€3,236 2m 60) (16)

401 2513 DANBY'S GORSE 12 (€5.5) J Johnson 6-11-10 E Coughlan 121
402 2514 DANBY'S GORSE 12 (€5.5) J Johnson 6-11-10 E Coughlan 121

1.40 CANONS ASHBY SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (€1,800 2m 50) (21 runners)

101 4453 DRYAN 14 (€5.5) M Pugh 5-12-0 A P McCoy 116
102 4454 DRYAN 14 (€5.5) M Pugh 5-12-0 A P McCoy 116

2.10 LAMPPOST HALL HANDICAP CHASE (€2,085 2m 10) (9)

201 3111 SAIL BY THE STARS 20 (€5) T Foster 9-11-10 S Wynne 127
202 3112 SAIL BY THE STARS 20 (€5) T Foster 9-11-10 S Wynne 127

2.40 MICHAEL MCNAMUS NOVICES HURDLE (€2,653 2m 18) (18)

301 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01

4.10 ALTHORP HOUSE HANDICAP CHASE (€3,498 2m 10) (4)

601 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01

4.40 DANIEL BRAZIER INTERMEDIATE OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (€1,319 2m 18) (18)

1 1 RUSSELL ROAD 40 (€5) D Nicholson 6-11-11 R McCoy 121
2 1 RUSSELL ROAD 40 (€5) D Nicholson 6-11-11 R McCoy 121

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: D Nicholson, 27 winners from 65 runners, 41.5% Mes M James, 5 from 15, 33.3% Mes W Williams, 5 from 15, 33.3% Mes M James, 5 from 17, 29.4% J Jefferson, 4 from 16, 25% J Magee, 3 from 11, 27.3% P Heywood, 3 from 10, 30% J Magee, 3 from 10, 30% A P McCoy, 12 from 56, 21.4%

2.50 FORTSYTHA CONDITIONS STAKES (€3,371 1m) (7)

1 216 BARBAROSSA 6 (€5) G L Moore 6-9-6 Candy Moore 5
2 216 BARBAROSSA 6 (€5) G L Moore 6-9-6 Candy Moore 5

3.20 JAPONICA HANDICAP (€3,470 2m 60) (8)

1 60-1 MEANS BUSINESS 6 (€5) J Hetherington 9-12 (€5) 121
2 60-1 MEANS BUSINESS 6 (€5) J Hetherington 9-12 (€5) 121

3.50 CLEMATIS HANDICAP (€3,518 1m 20) (8)

1 460 KALINIKOS 6 (€5) C Epton 4-10-0 S Sanders 4
2 460 KALINIKOS 6 (€5) C Epton 4-10-0 S Sanders 4

3.00 RIEKE HETTRICKS WEDDING HANDICAP CHASE (€4,720 2m 10) (9)

1 12512 POLITICAL TOWER 13 (€5.5) G Harty 11-10-0 C McManis 127
2 12513 POLITICAL TOWER 13 (€5.5) G Harty 11-10-0 C McManis 127

3.30 ISLE OF SKYE BLENDED WHISKY NH NOVICES HURDLE (Div 1: €2,465 2m 10) (12 runners)

1 20014 BOUNDINGHORSE 12 (€5) J Howard Johnson 6-11-3 A S Sykes 93
2 20015 BOUNDINGHORSE 12 (€5) J Howard Johnson 6-11-3 A S Sykes 93

4.00 ALBA COUNTRY FOODS HUNTERS CHASE (Amateurs) (€1,861 3m 10) (9 runners)

0100-1 BUNYON BOUNCE 32 (€5) R O'Connell 12-12-12 S Doss 127
0100-2 BUNYON BOUNCE 32 (€5) R O'Connell 12-12-12 S Doss 127

4.30 MOET & CHANDON HURDLE (€2,388 2m 20) (9 runners)

1 401 MONICA'S CHARGE 21 (€5) M A Searns 6-11-10 M Pugh 127
2 402 MONICA'S CHARGE 21 (€5) M A Searns 6-11-10 M Pugh 127

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Wills, 6 from 50, 12% M C Wilson, 4 from 21, 19% M C Wilson, 4 from 21, 19% M C Wilson, 4 from 21, 19%

3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127
3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127

3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127
3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127

3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127
3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127

3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127
3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127

3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127
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3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127
3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127

3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127
3.30 (€) 1. SORRIDAR (F Lappin, 2-1) (€5) 127

THUNDERER

3.00 Tom Brodie
3.30 Queens Brigade
4.00 Fiscal Policy

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.00 TOM BRODIE
Carl Evans: 4.00 Fiscal Policy.

GUIDE

101 11243 6000 TIMES 12 (€5.5) J Johnson 6-11-10 E Coughlan 121
102 11244 6000 TIMES 12 (€5.5) J Johnson 6-11-10 E Coughlan 121

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES)

1.30 ISLE OF SKYE BLENDED WHISKY NH NOVICES HURDLE (Div 1: €2,465 2m 10) (12 runners)

1 101 AGHAWADDA GOLD 54 (€5) S Doss 1-11-3 M Pugh 127
2 102 AGHAWADDA GOLD 54 (€5) S Doss 1-11-3 M Pugh 127

2.00 TOPS NOVICES CHASE (Qualifier: €4,022 3m 10) (15 runners)

1 31-105 SOLASHTRY 16 (€5) R Johnson 7-11-3 S Wynne 127
2 31-106 SOLASHTRY 16 (€5) R Johnson 7-11-3 S Wynne 127

2.30 GLASSEN SCOTTISH JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE (€-Y-D: €4,065 2m 10) (10 runners)

1 11 ROSSO 19 (€5) J Gandy 11-9-5 P Allen 127
2 12 ROSSO 19 (€5) J Gandy 11-9-5 P Allen 127

FORM FOCUS

Robbo beat Swing West 2 in 11-runner age novice hurdle at Newcastle (2m, good to soft). Deep Water beat J J Basso 5 in 12-runner novice hurdle at Kelso (2m, good to soft).

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Wolverhampton
Going: Standard
1.30 (7) TIME OF NIGHT (F Pacey, 11-9) 127
2.30 (€) 1. MARY JANE (P Fweeney, 5-9) 127

1.30 (7) TIME OF NIGHT (F Pacey, 11-9) 127
2.30 (€) 1. MARY JANE (P Fweeney, 5-9) 127

RACELINE
KELSO TOWCESTER LINGFIELD IRISH
101 102 201 202
103 203
161 261
FULL RESULTS SERVICE 108

FOOTBALL

Cardiff aim to ban perpetrators of Elm Park violence

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

FOOTBALL received another vivid yet sad reminder on Tuesday night that the hooligan element is still present within the English game.

From my local police and from my local police and photos they might have and I shall be looking at them closely.

The only way to solve this problem is to pick out the culprits and ban them for life. I won't tolerate it at this club. I love the passion of the Welsh supporters but I don't want these mindless idiots associated with us.

Of the 29 arrests, 12 were from the Reading area and 17 from Cardiff. The Football Association is waiting for reports from Steve Lodge, the referee, and the local police. Steve Double, an FA spokesman, who was present at the game, said: "When we have seen the reports, we will make a decision on what action, if any, we might take."

Lodge said that he would not include any reference to the disturbances. "All I will mention is the late kick-off, which I decided upon after talking police advice," he said. The start was delayed by four

minutes as the Cardiff fans queued to get into the ground. It was revealed yesterday that a steward was specially designated to "shadow" the assistant referee, who was running the touchline along the South Bank side of the ground, which houses Reading fans but is not protected by fences. It came in the wake of the alleged assault on Edward Martin, the linesman who was injured during the Nationwide League first division match between Portsmouth and Sheffield United at Fratton Park on Saturday.

"There is no real comparison between what happened at Elm Park and what happened at Portsmouth," Double said. "What happened at Reading was nowhere near as serious."

It could have been for Matt Blackman, a news reporter with the Reading Evening Post. He was head-butted by two Cardiff fans as he spoke to a friend on his mobile phone. "They accused me of criticising Cardiff as I was speaking," Blackman said. "There were a few insults, angry looks and then a head hit my face. It hurt a bit, but not as much as losing on penalties must have hurt them."

Reading will play Sheffield United at Bramall Lane in the fifth round. United defeated Ipswich Town 1-0 in their replay, a penalty from Don Hutchison proving enough. Wolverhampton Wanderers beat Charlton Athletic 3-0 at Molineux to secure a last-16 tie against Wimbledon at Selhurst Park.



Double awaiting reports

Parker steps over fine line

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

GARRY PARKER was fined £750 by the Football Association yesterday for foul and abusive language to a referee. To professionals such as the Leicester City midfielder, such punishments are part and parcel of the league season — only Parker was running the line for the official at the time.

Parker was also warned about his conduct after he was reported to the Oxfordshire county league. He was watching the Morrells Oxford Sunday league match between Cherwell Lions and Cowley Cosmos.

Parker's manager at Leicester, Martin O'Neill, also picked up a punishment after being found guilty of misconduct against Everton on December 28. He was found guilty of insulting and

improper language to the referee, Jeff Winter, and was fined £2,500, severely censured and warned about his future conduct.

Carlton Palmer, of Southampton, was banned for one match and fined £1,000 for foul and abusive language towards Gerald Ashby during the FA Cup third-round tie at Derby County on January 3.

Wimbledon have asked the European Commission in Brussels to investigate the Football Association of Ireland's refusal to allow the FA Carling Premiership club to move to a stadium in Dublin.

Wimbledon claim they want to accept an offer from an Irish syndicate, headed by the property developer, Owen O'Callaghan, to move to

a 40,000-seat stadium on the outskirts of Dublin. Liverpool have recalled the midfielder player, David Thompson, from his spell on loan at Swindon Town as cover for Jason McAteer, who broke a leg on Saturday.

Lee Bowyer, the Leeds United midfielder player, will be banned for two matches after being booked for the fifth time in the Pontif's League defeat against Nottingham Forest on Tuesday. He misses the game at Newcastle United on February 22, and the home game against Southampton.

Joe Parkinson, who has not played for Everton this season because of a knee injury, learnt yesterday that he faces another year out of the game. He will be sent to a specialist in Sweden for a cartilage transplant operation.

Warne rests to ease the strain

Pat Gibson reports on the leg spinner's need for recuperation before Australia's tour of India

Shane Warne was withdrawn from the Australia squad for a one-day international tournament in New Zealand yesterday, increasing fears that the great match-winner in Test cricket is close to physical "burn-out" because of his colossal workload.

Warne, who took his 300th wicket in only his 63rd Test when he bowled Australia to victory over South Africa in Sydney a month ago, looked far from his normal self in the final Test in Adelaide, where 48 overs brought him only three more wickets for 147 runs.

A few days rest, Mark Taylor, who no longer captains Australia's one-day side since they decided to split their Test and one-day teams, said: "It's not up to me, but as captain of the Test side, I would like him to have a rest. I don't think he turned the ball as much as Stuart MacGill [another leg spinner, who was making his debut] and that was just through tiredness."

Now the selectors have agreed and Warne will be given a rest before Australia embark on their three-Test tour of India. "It's making me nervous," Warne said. "It's the amount of overs I've bowled that made my shoulder a bit sore when I pulled up after the game."

Even so, he will be seeing a specialist during the next few days about a problem which seemed to upset the rhythm of his bowling in Adelaide and prevented him from sending down a googly in the entire match. He looked close to exhaustion after bowling more than 350 overs in six Tests against New Zealand and South Africa this winter, which brought him 39 wickets at 22 runs apiece.

The South Africans, meanwhile, were flying home to face five more Tests in seven weeks — three against Pakistan and two against Sri Lanka — before they can even begin to think about their tour of England this summer.

Their, too, is an awesome workload but they seem to stand up to it well and the scale of England's task was emphasised when Taylor ranked them alongside Pakistan and West Indies as the hardest opponents Australia have faced during their run of nine successive Test series victories.

"They are a different sort of side to either Pakistan or the West Indies," Taylor said. "South Africa are a much better-drilled side than the other two, and tend to blow hot and cold. And they have got some improving



Warne looked very tired after bowling more than 350 overs in six Tests this winter.

players." Taylor singled out Jacques Kallis, the young all-rounder who learnt a lot from playing for Middlesex in the county championship last summer, as the man who could make a big difference to them in the next year or so with both bat and ball.

Kallis saved South Africa from defeat in the first Test at Melbourne with a six-hour century and, although he did not do so well in Adelaide, Taylor said: "I thought he bowled particularly well."

"He didn't get a lot of wickets but he was as good a support for Shaun Pollock as anyone. I think his cricket could be a major factor in how South Africa go."

They probably need a person who can average 40-plus in Test cricket, rather than a star player rather than

the seven or eight guys they have got who are averaging between the high 20s and the high 30s. They need a guy who is going to stand out, like Steve Waugh for want of a better example."

One player who will not be playing any part in South Africa's hectic schedule is Dave Richardson, 38, who announced his retirement yesterday. The wicketkeeper who has played in all but one of his country's 43 Tests since South Africa's re-admission to international cricket, said: "I was hoping to make it through to the England tour, but I think I've made the right decision."

Richardson's 152 dismissals — 150 catches and two stumpings — is a record for South Africa. He missed the second Test against Pakistan,

in Sheiktopura, two months ago when a strained hamstring prevented him from achieving an unblemished record. Ironically, the match was then rained off.

He had been contemplating retirement for some time. "It's a sad moment, an emotional moment," he said, "but if I'm really honest with myself and I think ahead... even now this morning the thought of having to walk out against Pakistan at the Wanderers and all the pressures and physical demands that are involved, I wouldn't really want to play."

An arthritic hip helped him to make up his mind. "It's been an ongoing thing which one can keep under control with the help of anti-inflammatories," he said, "but they don't really work."

BOXING

King tries to keep links with Tyson

By SRIKUMAR SEN BOXING CORRESPONDENT

DON KING, the American promoter, yesterday tried to play down reports of a split between him and Mike Tyson, the former world heavyweight champion. According to American newspapers, Tyson had written to King and his joint-managers, John Horne and Rory Holloway, seeking to end his ten-year association with them.

However, the rift is clearly more serious than the promoter would have other people believe, for his response came through a public relations company and Showtime, the United States television company that is backing Tyson, was told by his lawyers not to speak to the press. "It's total shutdown," Jay Larkin, the head of Showtime Sport and Entertainment, said.

Tyson, who has made up to \$112 million after coming out of prison in March 1995, having served a sentence for rape, is believed to be down to \$150,000 in liquid assets and to owe several million dollars to the tax man. He is said to be blaming King for his plight.

Speaking through Rogich Communications — the public relations firm hired to represent Tyson after he was banished from boxing for biting a piece out of Evander Holyfield's ear during a world title contest in Las Vegas in June last year — King said: "I love Mike and he knows it, but there are often outside forces and individuals that will try to capitalise on Mike's frustration that comes from his lay-off as a result of the suspension."

"We'll work through those too, because our common goal is to get Mike back to training and into the ring. I think there is sometimes a frustration and misunderstanding that can occur in the best of friendships and business relationships and that's how we capitalised this."

Horne and Holloway said they would stand by their old friend and employer and "work through all the frustrations".

It is said that the former world heavyweight champion had come under the influence of a group of businessmen in Los Angeles, but it is difficult to see what Tyson's new friends can do for him that King cannot. Tyson must wait until June to apply to the Nevada State Athletic Commission for a licence. The contract between Tyson and King, Horne and Holloway has three years still to run and it would be surprising if the promoter cannot smooth things over quickly.

RUGBY Wood relishes form challenge



FOR THE RECORD: AMERICAN FOOTBALL, ATHLETICS, BASKETBALL, SNOW REPORTS, CYCLING, FOOTBALL, TENNIS, SNOOKER, SQUASH, RUGBY SCHOOL, REAL TENNIS, CRICKETLINE WEST INDIES V ENGLAND.

THE TIMES PRESENTS Valentine's Day Week end Burberrys OF LONDON Tell someone you love them in 12 words or more... Includes a form for ordering cards and a price list.

Handwritten note: 150

RUGBY UNION

Woodward relishes formidable challenge

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

CLIVE WOODWARD, the England coach, was balancing expediency with philosophy yesterday. He is an enthusiastic supporter of European union within rugby, as a counterbalance to the heavyweights of the southern hemisphere. But, on Saturday, his team must begin the Five Nations Championship by beating their most powerful northern-hemisphere rivals — France.

"We have to work with each other to make sure that northern-hemisphere rugby is a strong product," Woodward said. "It's unhealthy for the guys in the south to dominate world rugby and Fran Cotton is the first man I can think of who has tried to pull things together so that we can create a Europe in which everyone is strong."

Cotton, the Rugby Football Union board's vice-chairman (playing), announced his strategy for Europe last week, ahead of a Five Nations in which Ireland and Scotland —

represented by Philippe Saint-Andre, Thierry Lacroix and Laurent Cabannes, has severed and instead the France selectors have erred towards youth and form. The one newcomer is Christophe Dominici, 25, who has been a regular try-scorer for Stade Français after transferring from Toulon.

"It's a very fast team, but I expected that," Woodward said. "I think they made a mistake picking the English-based players. Here, they have a team which plays its rugby in France, it's young and exciting, the players have nothing to lose."

France have a powerful and mobile front five, but they will look to the new pairing of Thomas Castaignède and Philippe Carbonneau at half-back to bring the side to life. Carbonneau, who was in defiant mood after his Brive side had lost the Heineken Cup final to Bath last weekend, was preferred to Fabien Galthié at scrum half while Castaignède, who played centre during his first international season, now plays fly half regularly for Castres.

"It is important that all the players are at the top of their form as I believe England will probably provide us with our toughest test of the Five Nations," Jo Maso, the France manager, said. "Last season, we beat them but England have had valuable matches against the southern-hemisphere countries."

The French authorities refuse to contemplate the postponement of Saturday's game as attempts continue to unthaw the playing surface at the new Stade de France. "I'm divided between anger and derision," Bernard Lapasset, president of the French rugby federation, said. "I believe we have 48 hours at the outside to get everything in place to pitch the match. I simply expect from those in charge that they present a stadium to meet the ambitions we have for the Stade de France."

David McHugh, of Ireland, has replaced Derek Bevan (Wales) as referee for the match in Paris. Bevan yesterday failed a fitness test on the ankle he injured last weekend.

FRANCE: J. Sédouary (Colonel), B. Bouchard (Lieutenant), G. Lemerle (Major), G. Glas (Bourgeois), C. Dominici (P. Capitaine), G. Cahillan (Toucan), R. Barre (Oie, capitaine), F. Tournalen (Toucan), D. Brouzet (Blague), B. Bouchard (P. Capitaine), P. Benetton (Agent), C. Magne (Grive), J. Lavrenment (P. Capitaine), R. Aguirre (P. Capitaine), G. Collet (Colonel), D. Augereau (P. Capitaine), X. Garbajosa (Toucan), M. Lavrenment (Stade Français), J. Claret (P. Capitaine), C. Soustelle (Colonel), M. de la Roche (Agent).



FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

who meet in Dublin on Saturday — are perceived to be struggling to maintain standards. However, Woodward is also aware of the perils of favouritism in a championship which, even now, seldom goes according to prediction.

"As a sportsman, I love the Five Nations and, with the World Cup coming up, it's probably even more important than ever," Woodward said. "I'm more nervous about this than I was before Christmas when England played the three southern-hemisphere nations."

"I suppose we're favourites, along with France. There is more expectation and I'm desperate to win these games so that we can arrive at the World Cup with people feeling we have more than a good chance of winning it."

Woodward welcomed the selection of an exciting France team in which there are eight changes from the that which lost 52-10 to South Africa in November. The English con-



Nigel Felton, one of several British experts helping to thaw the pitch before France meet England on Saturday, works at the Stade de Paris yesterday

Armstrong prepares to lead from the front

Mark Souster finds Scotland looking to their new captain for an inspiring example against Ireland

ONCE Scotland had dipped into their immediate past, by turning once more to Jim Telfer and Ian McGeechan in an attempt to restore credibility, it was natural that they in turn would look back to the future for their next captain and opt for Gary Armstrong in succession to Rob Wainwright. Armstrong is the thread that links the present side to the relatively golden period of the early Nineties, when Armstrong, probably at his peak, was in harness with Craig Chalmers, with whom he is partnered against Ireland on Saturday.

Armstrong was not picked for his ambassadorial qualities. When the team to play the Irish was announced at Murrayfield, Armstrong, 31, was conspicuous by his absence at the press conference. That is not his style. A quiet introvert off the field, he leads by example on it.

He admits as much. "I am a man of few words. I like to do my talking on the field and hopefully that won't change," Armstrong, who will win his 37th cap against Ireland, said. "I aim to lead from the front and give 100 per cent and, if I have 14 boys behind me all

giving the same, there's no reason why we can't get a result in Dublin. "It's everyone's dream to play for their country, but captaining the side is extra special. It's been a tough past few months for us, but hopefully this will be a turning point." If anyone epitomises the passion that has been missing

in Scotland after a calamitous autumn that included record defeats by Australia and South Africa, it is Armstrong, who has resurrected his career since moving to Newcastle from Jed-Forest in late 1995. His fortunes have fluctuated over the past four years; he has been dropped in favour of Bryan Redpath and Andy Nicol, only to claw his way

Unions unite on Europe debate

ENGLAND'S leading clubs have found only limited support from the Rugby Football Union (RFU) for their withdrawal from the European Cup and will be working on behalf of our clubs to bring agreement... on the three main issues," the statement said. "Those issues include a structured season agreeable to clubs and unions, as well as the financial and performance criteria. Even so, representatives of the leading clubs in England and France will

meet in Paris on Saturday, with the English clubs still concerned at the RFU's vision for the playing future under which, they claim, players contracted to the RFU would be available for no more than ten club matches a year. "English First-Division Rugby is committed to building a strong national team," Peter Wheeler, the clubs' spokesman, said. "But cherry-picking parts of the southern-hemisphere model to graft onto the English club culture will not work."

SQUASH

No rest as Wright digs for victory

By COLIN McQUILLAN

SUE WRIGHT has had little chance to reflect on her successful defence of the British title in Manchester on Monday. The next evening she was required to fight for the deciding point for her Potters Bar National Squash League side against Hallamshire and, today, she is in Norway to defend her European champion of champions crown.

"I did not realise just how tired I was from the Nationals until I was 0-5 down against Jenny Tranfield at Potters Bar," Wright said. "I just about managed to pull back the first game on a tie-break but it was not until the third game that I was sure I could save the match."

Wright won 10-9, 9-7, 9-1 against Tranfield, who was a strong quarter-finalist in the nationals and one of the more encouraging performers in the women's championship in Manchester. "I could have done with a less determined opponent on Tuesday evening," Wright said. Backed by wins from Jamie Davies and Iain Higgins, her efforts were enough to earn a 3-2 home victory that kept the Mitsubishi Electric squad at the head of the NSL group A.

The older Potters Bar men — John Ransome, and Paul Carter — could not garner a single game against Paul Lord and Nick Wall, of Hallamshire, but their side is already assured of a place in the playoffs.

Corr delighted to be leading renaissance

IT is different for the men but Karen Corr, 28, does not expect to pocket a fortune from playing snooker. Paul Hunter, 19, became the latest well-heeled winner in the men's game when he potted his way to the £60,000 first prize in the Royal Welsh Open at Newport 11 days ago.



However, the first champion of the green baize that day was Corr, who collected just £1,000 for lifting the corresponding women's title. As the world No 1, she was expected to win but, with such a meagre prize, it remains difficult for her to survive as one of only two women professionals in Britain.

"I compete on the professional circuit, along with Kelly Fisher, because I love the game, but it's very hard without proper backing," Corr said. "We might be struggling financially at the moment, but I think the women's game does have a future."

Such optimism is due to the recent helping hand extended by the sport's world governing body. No longer will the World Ladies Billiards and Snooker Association (WLBSA) stand alone. The World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA) has taken the distaff side under its wing and will use its expertise to help to promote and develop the women's game.

For players such as Corr, it feels like a lifeline. "We've had our own association for 16 or 17 years but being taken on board by the WPBSA gives us much more opportunity to get more people interested in us," Corr said. "Also, we can now play our finals

before the men's and playing on the match tables, when all the cameras are there for the men's event, is new and very exciting for the ladies."

Bruce Beckett, media relations manager for the WPBSA, says that there is no discrimination against women trying to reach professional standard. "There is a feeling among the men players that the women's game will complement the sport," Beckett said. "We used to play things like mixed doubles and it's true that snooker would benefit from more variety. The ultimate aim is to see how good women can become."

Allison Fisher became the most famous woman player, winning the world title seven times before she decided, for financial reasons, to cross the Atlantic to play pool. Beckett believes it was snooker's loss. "The sport missed a glorious opportunity a few years ago

when Allison was at her peak," he said. "It would have given women's snooker a massive lift to see her competing alongside the men." Corr has just returned from Canada where fees earned from exhibition matches and coaching augmented the meagre winnings on offer in the nine leading women's events in Britain. She has no plans to follow Fisher. "There's good prize-money on offer in the States," Corr said. "Allison has earned about £200,000 (£120,000) in two years but my heart and soul are in snooker."

It all began when she was 14. "My brother and dad used to play and I started hitting the ball at the local club in Bourne," she said. "I loved it straightaway and still play there. I left school at 16 and worked as a receptionist in my father's dental practice but, when he retired in 1989, I decided to go into snooker full time."

Initially it seemed a sound financial decision. Corr won her first world title a year later and a cheque for £10,000. In 1991 she added the World Masters and collected £15,000. "There was a lot more money in the game then and greater numbers playing," she added. "It wasn't unusual to have about 90 entries for the big tournaments." That is the exact number of players registered with the WLBSA at present. However, because of the newly-forged relationship with the men's game, players who were lost amid declining competition and dwindling prize-money



Corr, the world No 1, is keen to help women's snooker to emerge from the shadows of the men's game

are now drifting back. Tessa Davidson, the beaten finalist at the Regal Welsh Open, had packed up her cue for nearly three years. "It's great to see her back," Corr said. "The more competition the better it is for the future." What that holds will largely depend on the next generation of players, though Corr has the talent and motivation to close in on Fisher's records. She appreciates, though, that

the standard of the men's game is now so high that she may never qualify for a WPBSA tournament. "Kelly and I are on the professional circuit now, but it's not so much what we do, as what someone a lot younger up ahead might do," Corr said. "I want to encourage the other girls, see the game taken on merit and earn a decent living, doing what I love."

SNOOKER

Suffering Ebdon lets Bond ease through

By PHIL YATES

ALL sportsmen dread ill health coinciding with an important occasion. As such, the worst fears of Peter Ebdon were realised when, rendered defenceless by a bout of flu, he was eliminated from the Benson & Hedges Masters at Wembley Conference Centre yesterday.

Three days in bed, the loss of almost a stone in weight from an already slight frame, and persistent attacks of dizziness had left Ebdon vulnerable. It was therefore no surprise that Nigel Bond, a tough opponent to beat at the best of times, prevailed 6-2.

Bond performed well, with breaks of 72, 112 and 51, but a sequence of misjudgements from Ebdon made life easy. He can expect a much sterner assignment against Stephen Lee or, more likely, Stephen Hendry in the quarter-finals.

Ebdon arrived at his lowest ebb in the seventh frame. At 52-0, Bond missed a straightforward red but it went unpunished as, two shots later, Ebdon jawed an even simpler black to a middle pocket. Although five reds remained on the table, and Bond still needed to pot at least three balls to reach safety, Ebdon conceded.

"That wasn't like Peter at all," Bond, who with the exception of his triumph at the Scottish Masters has had a low-key season, said. "Normally you expect him to fight to the death."

It was hardly fitting that Ebdon should arrive at a meaningful statistical landmark in such depressing fashion. By collecting £14,000 as a second-round loser, he became only the fifteenth player in the history of the game to carry his career prize-money over £1 million.

In a re-entractment of the final of 12 months ago, Steve Davis, the title-holder, meets Ronnie O'Sullivan tonight for a place in the last four. "Ronnie's head will be steaming and he'll be absolutely desperate to avoid what happened last time," Davis, who recovered from a seemingly hopeless 8-4 deficit to win 10-5, said.

Before the event began, O'Sullivan would have been an overwhelming favourite. He has already won the United Kingdom championship and an invitation event in China this season while, in his first four world ranking tournament appearances of the campaign, Davis has won only two matches.

Yet, by compiling breaks of 78, 100, 86 and 100 during a 6-2 victory over Darren Morgan on Tuesday, Davis successfully bolstered flagging confidence. It is ironic that O'Sullivan is indirectly responsible for the upturn in fortunes being enjoyed by the six-times world champion.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Graham gets another world title chance

BOXING: At the age of 38, Herol Graham has been given another chance to challenge for a world championship. He will face Charles Brewer, of Philadelphia, the International Boxing Federation (IBF) champion, in Atlantic City, New Jersey on March 28 on the undercard of Lennox Lewis's World Boxing Council heavyweight title defence against Shannon Briggs. The Sheffield super-middleweight lost title bouts against Mike McCullum in 1989 and Julian Jackson in 1990. On the same night, Paul Lloyd, of England, meets Tim Austin, of the United States, for the IBF bantamweight title in Hull.

Wales drop captain

BOWLS: Gareth Jones, the Wales captain, has been dropped for the home international series which will be played at Swansea from March 11-13. All six rinks have been changed and the selectors have awarded four new caps. Wayne Phillips, from Radnorshire, the British Isles Under-25 indoor champion, and Steve Jackson, of Cardiff, the national singles champion, will make their first international appearances along with Andrew Wason, of Cardiff, and David Witchell, of Islay.

Edwards sets pace

SAILING: Tracy Edwards and her all-women crew on Royal & Sun Alliance completed an impressive first 24 hours of their round-the-world voyage yesterday, covering 450 miles at an average speed of 18.7 knots. Attempting to break the record of 71 days 14hr 22min set by Olivier de Kersusson's trimaran, Sport-Elec, last year, the huge catamaran was 80 miles south-southwest of Cape Finisterre, sailing in 35 knots of breeze from the east-northeast.

Spin foils Zimbabwe

CRICKET: New Zealand beat Zimbabwe by 40 runs in the first match of the one-day international series in Hamilton yesterday. Zimbabwe were going well in pursuit of a victory target of 249 when Stephen Fleming, the New Zealand captain, turned to his slow bowlers. Chris Harris broke the opening stand at 75 in his second over and Daniel Vettori, the left-arm bowler, finished with his best one-day figures of four for 49.

United in grief and remembrance



The Munich memorial clock at Old Trafford and the stained glass window in Dudley stand as fitting tributes



Michael Henderson reflects on how a tragedy 40 years ago has shaped and fortified a city and led to the phenomenal rise of a football club

The memorial at Old Trafford to the eight Manchester United footballers who perished on February 6, 1958 makes no attempt at adornment. Etched in bronze on the East Stand, across the width of an imaginary football field that you might see on a child's birthday cake, the names are listed alphabetically.

People go to the ground every day to look at it and perhaps have their picture taken. This week they have been there in their hundreds, as the world of football joins the club, and the city of Manchester, in commemorating the fortieth anniversary of that unhappy day.

In Manchester Cathedral tomorrow there will be a memorial service. On Saturday a minute's silence before the home game with Bolton Wanderers will honour the players who lost their lives when the BEA Elizabethan, Lord Burleigh, stopped to refuel in Munich on its way home from a European Cup tie in Belgrade and failed to clear the runway. Roger Byrne, Geoff Bent, Eddie Colman, Duncan Edwards, Mark Jones, David Pegg, Tommy Taylor, Billy Whelan. The officials who died with them were Walter Crickmer, secretary, Bert Whalley, coach, and Tom Curry, trainer.

The fixture respects the anniversary. It was Bolton, with two goals from Nat Lofthouse, the second when he charged into Harry Gregg, the goalkeeper, who beat a weakened United side in the FA Cup final three months after Munich. Gregg, the man who went back into the plane to help recover bodies, was a hero of the crash, so Bolton were not universally popular winners.

Tributes will be paid, by a few who saw that team and many who did not, but the story is well enough known to need no amplification and the present players are paying the best tribute of all. They are top of the league and on the cusp of success in the European Cup, as Matt Busby's "Babes" were. Best of all, they have achieved their success by playing football worthy of their inheritance.

By chance — not design, surely — there is a revealing sight at Old Trafford. A sponsor's advertisement across the road from the Munich memorial shows Paul Scholes, Ryan Giggs and the Neville brothers, Gary and Philip, starting out in the moody modern way. Internationals all, they are at a similar stage of their careers as the men who went down in the crash.

Philip Neville is 21, the same age as Colman and Edwards. Giggs, the most senior 24-year-old in the game, is as



Charlton scores in the match against Belgrade

old as Jones was. The young fans who have grown up watching these players, for whom the events of 1958 are as distant as the Napoleonic Wars, may like to consider the likely emotional resonance if the present champions were suddenly to disappear in tragic circumstances.

The difference is that, whereas the previous team played for Manchester United who, for all their success, were one club among many, the new breed belong to "the most famous football club in the world". Whether or not that claim is justified it is made frequently, and not only in Manchester.

There are many reasons for United's vast international following, but the single most important is Munich. They have no equal in Britain. Arsenal may have achieved fame 20 years earlier, and Liverpool won seven more championships, with four European Cups to United's one, but only one club has real international clout. Arsenal are not liked beyond London, and not really liked there. Liverpool, for all their success, are still essentially a parish club. Only the two Glasgow teams can approach United for depth of popular support throughout the world, and their following is rooted in fertile socio-cultural soil.

In Europe, Real Madrid, Juventus, Ajax, Bayern Munich and the Milan clubs can all boast of superior achievements and, if size is measured by numbers, Barcelona can claim to be the biggest of all. Yet, if you go to Manhattan or Dubai, Johannesburg or Sydney, Reykjavik or Hong Kong, the most celebrated name in football is the club formed as Newton Heath LYR (Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway) in 1878.

It is not as if Old Trafford, with its capacity of 55,000, is even a big ground, compared with Barcelona or Bayern, and the surrounding area is dismal. But a football pitch is more than a field, a ground is more than an assembly of players and a tradition amounts to more than a collection of trophies. Old Trafford was christened some time in the Sixties as "the theatre of dreams" and it is, in its way, a temple to Theosis. Old Trafford, like the Old Vic,

Carnegie Hall, or the Louvre, enjoys a reputation that reaches beyond followers of a particular activity.

Munich cannot, by itself, account for the way that the club's name has circled the globe. Torino had an air tragedy of their own nine years earlier, and they are not even the most famous club in Turin. But it was Munich and the way that United regrouped under Busby with a stellar cast to find glory in that most self-advertising of decades, the Sixties, that laid the foundations of an international phenomenon that becomes more phenomenal by the year.

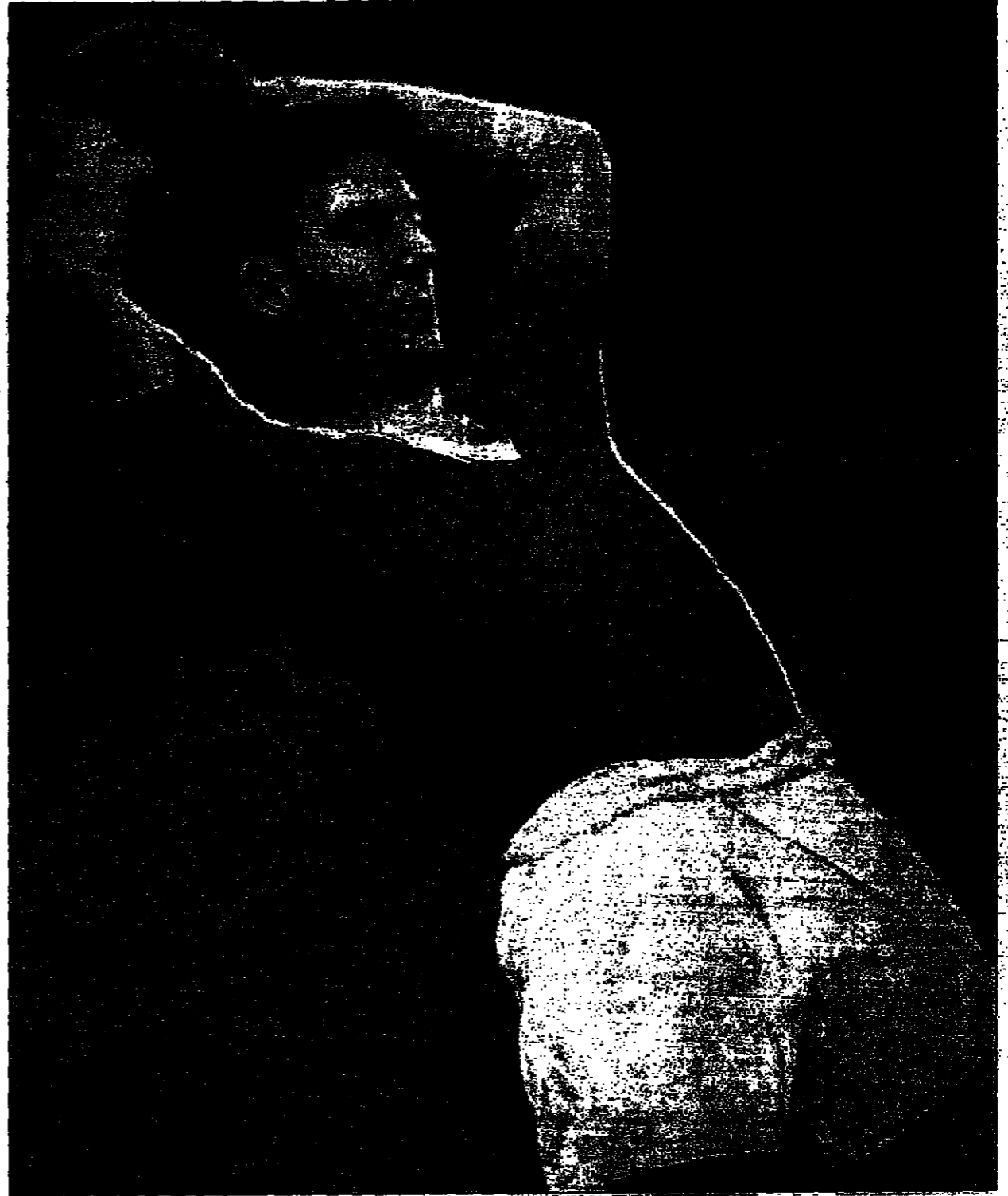
The club that Michael Knighton almost bought six years ago for £10 million is now valued at £500 million. It has its own newspaper, radio station and rail link. The Press Association, the national news agency, has assigned a reporter to the club, in the manner of a royal correspondent.

Supporters come from every continent. United have 145,000 members and 210 official branches of the supporters club worldwide. They could sell out Old Trafford every game with season-ticket holders, but prefer to impose a ceiling of 40,000 to ensure that the crowd does not stagnate. A club official, who may not be the most disinterested witness, admitted, put their casual following in the United Kingdom at four million.

This is all a long way from the days when Al Read Sr, the father of the celebrated comedian, used to park his pie van underneath the main stand before every home game and wait for the inevitable summons to move it, which was played over the public address system to hoisting from the crowd. "Just listen to that," he would tell little Al. "You can't beat free publicity."

It is not hard to see how much the club means to the City of Manchester. Madrid and Amsterdam are famous capitals, Milan and Barcelona are important regional centres and the rebuilt city of Munich is one of the glories of Europe. Manchester is a provincial contribution that has sloughed off the burden of being the world's first industrial city, "the wonder of the age", but not managed to forge a new identity.

United, as they became in



Edwards epitomised the spirit of the Busby Babes. Nobody will ever know how good he might have become

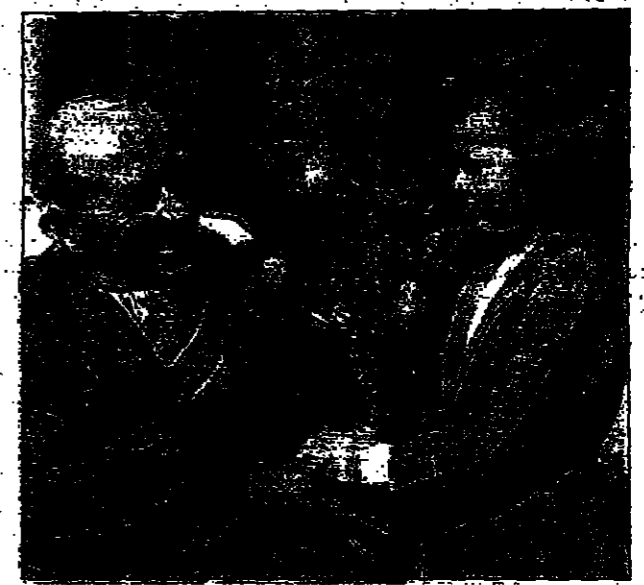


A simple plaque commemorates those who died

1902, were formed in a pub close by Piccadilly railway station. It isn't there now because it has been demolished to make way for a hotel.

On the next block is a timbered building that used to do service as the Coach and Horses, where Engels slaked his thirst 150 years ago when he was researching life among the Manchester working classes. It is interesting to think that two 20th-century cults, international socialism and Manchester United, were hatched within 200 yards of each other in a grotty street.

It was said, in those days, that "the quickest way out of Manchester is gin" but there was always more to it than that. This was a city of immense civic pride, home of free trade and nonconformism, liberal in politics and commerce. It had a newspaper that took its name across the world and which is still known in America as the Manchester Guardian. It was where Mr Rolls met Mr Royce, attracted theatre premieres before



Busby recuperating in a Munich hospital

The United players have not lived in Manchester for years. The Busby Babes may have been billeted in suburban Burnage, among the people who followed them, but ever since George Best left his digs in Chorlton to set up camp in his Bramhall fortress, the newly rich have colonised the leafy lanes of north Cheshire. These days the fast-riser is given more than is good for him at an early age and young men earn more in a bad month than the Sixties stars took home in a good year.

And what stars they had. Has any team in any country had such a concentration of talent as Best, Law and Charlton? Has any club benefited as much as United have done by association with that remarkable fraternity? Each was European Footballer of the Year in an era that was not short of great players, although Law was absent on the night in May 1968 when they beat Benfica at Wembley to win the European Cup.

Odd as it seems, United became more celebrated, not less, when Busby's final great team broke up and he handed over the reins. They went nine years, from 1968 to 1977, without winning anything; in that time they were relegated and, though it has been largely forgotten, their fans acquired a reputation for violent behaviour. But a flame had been lit. A flowering of talent was expected every time the crocus came out, and it is to the present team's immense credit that it has lived with that burden of expectation and exceeded all reasonable hopes.

To this day, some of their supporters put others off, and not just those in the stands. One fan with a word processor chronicled a recent year-in-the-life and called his book *Are You Watching Liverpool?* It is a dreary, indulgent wallow and serves to confirm people's worst impressions of the arrogant Red. Roy mawkish titles, though the first prize still goes to *Man Utd: The Religion*.

One must set against that arrogance the hatred that United attract from the suburban tribes that attach themselves to other clubs. The side that Alex Ferguson has moulded in the past five years is providing English crowds with the most pleasing football that this country has seen for two decades and, away from Old Trafford, the players are repaid with scorn.

To call it envy, as some do, is to ignore the sheer nastiness of it all. It is hatred, nothing less, and it is heard on grounds even when United are playing elsewhere. To hear the invective directed at them is to become a covert United supporter on grounds of good taste. The present players are setting standards for all and they are treated like lepers by fans who wear their intolerance as badges of honour.

It is possible to find the exact time and place of United's regeneration: the City Ground, Nottingham, on January 6, 1990, when a goal by Mark Robins gave them victory over Forest and put them on the way to the FA Cup final, where they needed two games to beat Crystal Palace.

Four months earlier, at Maine Road, United fans had shouted for Ferguson's head, during a 5-1 defeat against newly-promoted Manchester City, a result that still seems fanciful. Had they lost on that Sunday to Forest, who had a strong side in those days, it is unlikely that he would have survived.

But survive he did, and how. His 11-year stewardship of the club, in which he has refined it from bottom to top, winning four championships and two doubles, stands as one of the great achievements of English football. Now he needs only the European Cup — oh! — to stand a-ditoe with his great Scottish predecessor. In a world that is populated by too many frauds, sages and

Continued on page 45

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CHANGING TIMES

كندا من الامم

out
SHEET
WORD-WAT
By Philip H

but always and forever United



The wreckage of the BEA Elizabethan airliner that crashed on take-off at Munich airport. The crash claimed the lives of eight of the celebrated Busby Babes

Continued from page 44
 Peter-Johns Ferguson is a football man in the way that Busby, Shankly and Clough were. Given the way the game is changing, and not obviously for the better, he may be the last true football man.
 People who think that a big club runs itself talk nonsense. To manage Manchester United, in the way that Ferguson has chosen to do, must be the most demanding job of all. Between Busby's retirement and Ferguson's arrival in late 1986 the ring was held by Alex McQuinn, Frank O'Farrell, Tommy Docherty, Dave Sexton and Ron Atkinson, who all had money to buy

the best players and yet were unable to win the championship, or worse, prevent United becoming a poor second to Liverpool.
 To overhaul the club in full public gaze, and subsequently to take an established side to pieces in order to rebuild a better one with younger men, is a formidable achievement. Neither is the job complete. Even now, when they are top of the FA Cup and Premiership and through to the quarter-finals of the European Cup, United appear to be playing

pleases the United supporters is that so many of the players are local lads. The Neville brothers, Giggs, the Welsh-Manumian, and Nicky Butt were raised within a bus-ride of the ground and Scholes, who could turn out to be the best of all, is, like Colman before him, a Salford boy who imbibed the United mythology with his mother's milk.
 There is another place to contemplate the horrible events of Munich. In the Church of St Francis in Dudley, the Midlands town where Duncan Edwards was born, he is captured in stained glass as the young man he remains in the minds of those who saw

him. Nobody will ever know how good Edwards might have become, for he was only 21 when he breathed his last but, put it this way: men have grown old with his name on their lips.
 Not a day went by, Busby said many years later, that he did not think of the team that bore his name. United's success in the following years, leading up to the European Cup triumph in 1968, was some sort of compensation for that loss.
 "Glory, glory, Man United", the fans sang, and still sing, and it is a good shout. United have conferred glory on a game that, in England,

does not always reach for the sky.
 As the United story is daily embroidered and the club's estimation in the eyes of its admirers stretches ahead like an Alpine range, the events of 1958 can never be expunged from the collective memory. Sportsmen are trapped in time, because we prefer to see them as young men. In the case of Manchester United, whose international réclame is rooted in a tragedy that shaped the club in the minds of succeeding generations, it is inescapable.
 The young men who, by common consent, form the best team that Old Trafford

has seen for three decades, can write their own notices in the years to come. Thirty years after a happier anniversary, that winning of the European Cup, they can leave their imprimatur on the game in a way denied to the team that is remembered this week.
 Tomorrow, when they reflect on an event that happened before any of them were born, and from which neither they nor those who come after them will ever be free, they might consider the words with which Scott Fitzgerald completed *The Great Gatsby*: "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past".

THE LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY

If ever there was a chronicle of a death foretold it was the story that unfolded at Munich. At four minutes past three o'clock in the afternoon the *Lord Burleigh*, which had been frustrated twice in its attempts to take off, tried a third time and ended up a burning wreck in the snow.

At first it was thought that ice on the plane's wings had caused the accident. A British inquiry the following year showed that the slush on the runway had prevented a clear take-off. Twenty-three of the 43 passengers died in the crash. Apart from the eight players, and three members of the United staff, eight were journalists travelling with United and there were four others, including the co-pilot.

In retrospect the tragedy seems absurd. The passengers had reboarded the plane for that third take-off attempt, after returning to the airport terminal, and the players were clearly unsure about the plane's safety. This week Harry Gregg revealed in a television documentary that nobody wanted to lose face in front of his team-mates by speaking up. "It takes a brave man to be a coward," he said.
 In the moment of greatest danger Gregg was no coward. The goalkeeper returned to the stricken plane to drag others from the wreckage. Seven of the players went down with the plane. The eighth, Duncan Edwards, died in hospital two weeks later.

Matt Busby overcame serious injuries and returned to Manchester, where Jimmy Murphy, his assistant, had

taken over the team. The journalist casualties included Frank Swift, the former Manchester City goalkeeper, and Donny Davies. "Old International" of the *Manchester Guardian*, who had gone to Belgrade because John Arlott pulled out.

United's first match after Munich was an FA Cup tie, at home to Sheffield Wednesday, 13 days later when the match programme left United's team blank. They bought Ernie Taylor from Blackpool, and Stan Crowther, from Aston Villa, patched the side up with youngsters and won 3-0 on a tide of public sympathy. They went on to reach Wembley, where Busby was fit enough to watch them lose to Bolton Wanderers but not to lead them out.

In the years that followed, Busby rebuilt the team with players such as Denis Law, who was bought from Torino, and Pat Crerand, who signed from Celtic. Men such as Nobby Stiles emerged through the ranks and it was his great good luck that a freak called George Best came out of Belfast. United won the FA Cup in 1963 and the championship two years later.

In 1966 they reached the semi-finals of the European Cup after routing Benfica 5-1 in Portugal and, eventually, after winning the championship again in 1967, they beat Benfica, at Wembley, to take the European Cup, ten years on from the sad day at Munich. Two of the Busby Babes, Bobby Charlton and Bill Foulkes, were members of that cup-winning side.



Busby, right, tastes defeat in the 1958 FA Cup Final

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

On this hand from the high game at TGR's, the declarer (David Price) used all the available inferences to place the cards, then took ingenious advantage of the predicted layout.

Dealer South	East-West game	Rubber bridge
♠A4	♥KQJ96	♠QJ975
♥10875	♦A94	♥43
♦A762	♣A854	♦KJ5
♣J87		♣K83
	♠K1062	
	♥A2	
	♦Q1083	
	♣Q102	

Contract: Three No-Trumps by South. Lead: two of diamonds

West flickered noticeably, presumably thinking about doubling, before passing over Three No-Trumps, a foolish thing to do against an alert opponent. Price placed him with a correspondingly good share of the outstanding strength.
 The lead of the two of diamonds (fourth-highest, hence denying more diamonds than four) aroused further suspicion. Why had West rejected his partner's suit in favour of a poor four-card suit? Price concluded that West had the ace of spades, but was unwilling to release it after the Three No-Trump bid had announced a strong holding on his right. In that case, East was likely to have the king of clubs for his vulnerable overall.
 East won the king of diamonds, and returned the jack to the queen and ace. Not

reading the position, West feebly returned a third diamond — a club switch beats Three No-Trumps by force-ace-king of diamonds, the king of clubs and two spade tricks.
 Price could see five heart tricks if the suit broke, two diamonds, and the ace of clubs. If the spade ace was indeed on his left, the ninth trick would come from ducking twice in the suit, to force out the doubleton ace. In case West held precisely ace-nine doubleton, Price led the ten of spades from hand, to stop him getting in with the nine to switch to clubs. In practice, East won the jack and tried a club himself, but Price rose with the queen for his ninth trick.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Philip Howard

GEOID
 a. A medicinal wine gam
 b. A solid figure
 c. A skin eruption

GEFECHTSKERT-
WENDUNG
 a. An opera by Richard Strauss
 b. A naval manoeuvre
 c. Travel sickness

SKEET
 a. To make an escape
 b. Clay pigeon shooting
 c. A gambling card game

BURDASH
 a. A crematorium product
 b. A strain of sheep
 c. An ornament

Answers on page 46

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Anand's victory
 Today I reproduce a further win by Viswanathan Anand, the Indian grandmaster, from the recent tournament at Wijk aan Zee, Holland.

White: Viswanathan Anand
 Black: Paul van der Sterren
 Wijk aan Zee
 January 1998

Ray Lopez		
1 e4	a5	
2 Nf3	Ne6	
3 Bb5	a6	
4 Bc4	Nf6	
5 O-O	Be7	
6 Re1	b5	
7 Bb3	d6	
8 c3	O-O	
9 N3	Nc6	
10 d4	Nc7	
11 Nbd2	Be7	
12 Bc2	Ra6	
13 Nf1	Bf8	
14 Ng3	g6	
15 b3	Bg7	
16 c5	Rc8	
17 Bc3	c6	
18 O-O	Ce7	
19 Re1	b4	
20 Qd2	a5	
21 Bb1	c5	
22 Rf1	g4	
23 Nf2	axb3	
24 Bg5	Ra3	
25 axb3	Ra2	
26 Bc2		
27 Kh1	h5	
28 Rb1	Nf7	
29 Bc3	Qc8	
30 Ce1	Qe7	
31 Ne2	Bc8	
32 Bb1	Ra3	
33 Qc2	Rf8	
34 Ne1	Ra6	
35 Nd3	Nf6	
36 Re2	Ra5	
37 Nf3	Nf7	
38 Nf2	Nf6	
39 f4	ed4	
40 Bc4	Ne5	
41 Nee5	Ba5	
42 Bxe5	Qxe5	

Chess for charity
 On Saturday February 28, I will be taking on allcomers in a simultaneous display to raise money for the Joint Effort Appeal at St George's Hospital in Tooting. Those interested in playing should contact the appeal director Lucy de Ville on 0181-725 5096.

Times book
 The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B.T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01376 321276 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

THE MOVE

White to play. This position is from the game Swidler - Adianto, Groningen 1997. The young Russian Peter Swidler has recently achieved a ranking in the world's top ten. How did he demonstrate his sharp tactical eye in this position?

Solution on page 46

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Paris from LHR	£69
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THE TIMES AIR FRANCE TOKEN 10

All travel on European flights must be completed between March 2-August 20, 1998. No travel permitted between April 1-19, 1998. European flights will incur a £30 return supplement for departures after March 31, 1998. A weekend supplement (travel outward on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday) of £10 return per person applies to flights where Paris is the final destination.

Address: Air France, 125 (Charles de Gaulle), LHR (London Heathrow), LCV (London City), MAN (Manchester), SOU (Southampton), BHX (Birmingham), GLA (Glasgow), EDI (Edinburgh), NCL (Newcastle). Full terms and conditions appeared on Monday and Friday, Jan 26 and 30, 1998.

CHANGING TIMES

Game divided as Martin fights legal battle for his ticket to ride

JOHN HOPKINS



Golf Commentary

MUST A professional golfer walk during a competitive round of golf or can he ride in a cart? To walk or not to walk is a question a federal magistrate on the West Coast of the United States is wrestling with as Casey Martin, a 25-year-old professional with a very rare leg ailment, challenges the US PGA Tour's rule that prevents him from riding while competing. The verdict is expected today.

Golf has never been a game limited to those lucky enough to be perfectly blessed physically. Severiano Ballesteros's right arm is nearly two inches longer than his left, for example, and Vicente Fernandez's right leg is shorter than his left, enabling him to play every stroke from an uphill lie. More noted cases are those of the Americans, Ed Furgol and Calvin Peete. Furgol's left arm was broken in a childhood accident and was bent rigid when it was set. By devising a peculiar backswing, enabling him to deliver a powerful lunge at the ball, Furgol became good enough to compete in the 1957 Ryder Cup.

Peete played with a damaged left elbow. Despite this he became a prodigiously accurate driver — they used to say "Peete hasn't missed a fairway since the Korean war" — and he twice represented his country in Ryder Cup matches.

Furgol, Peete and others overcame their disabilities but Martin cannot. Martin can hit the ball well, chip and putt like a pro. What the 25-year-old cannot do is walk. If he cannot use a cart he will be unable to continue playing golf for he



Martin faces a restricted career unless he is allowed to use a cart for professional tournament play

suffers from Klippel-Trenaunay-Weber Syndrome. He is missing a vein in his lower right leg which is half the size of his left and bulges with swollen veins when he stands up.

When Martin walks, blood rushes into his knee causing pain and damage to the joint. Martin wears special support stockings to control the swelling and a pad to protect his knee from painful jarring.

This is an issue on which every golfer appears to have a view. The one, generally held by traditionalists, is that expressed by Tim Finchem, Commissioner of the US PGA Tour. "We think that endurance is a part of our sport. Walking has been an integral part of the competition, uniformly recognised by all the major bodies in golf for a long, long time," he said.

Michael Bonallack, secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, agrees with Finchem. The

PGA European Tour would not even consider allowing José Maria Olazábal the use of a cart when he was suffering from a career-threatening foot problem.

"What about my old friend Harry Bradshaw who was about four stone overweight, had the biggest feet you've

ever seen and terrible varicose veins?" Peter Alliss, the BBC TV golf commentator, said.

"No, if I had to decide for my life about Martin then I'd say 'bad luck son'. I have got every sympathy for him and if there was a way that was fair in every possible case then I would be for it. But there would always be someone who tried to buck the system. Where does it all stop?"

available only to golfers with a doctor's certificate. Carts are now allowed on the Seniors' Tour in the US, though they are banned on the equivalent tour in Europe and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

Those who would stop Martin from using a cart do so mainly because they believe there is an advantage to be gained from riding. "I think

that if I played in a cart I would be more competitive," Jack Nicklaus, who suffers from an injured hip, said.

But supposing there was not an advantage? "My game suffers when I play in a cart," Greg Norman, one of the few leading players to support Martin, said. "I get stiff and I can't get the feel of a course. This is a tough one for the PGA Tour but I would like to see him out there. If he was your son, how would you feel?"

The PGA Tour fears that if Martin wins, it will have lost the right to govern itself. Martin is fighting the case under the auspices of the Americans With Disabilities Act, a law enacted to prevent discrimination against handicapped people. If Martin were to win, such a victory would have far-reaching repercussions. But some times one's heart has more to do with the head. This is one such case. Let him ride.

'We think that endurance is an integral part of our sport'

Whatever you do, they'll be watching...

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The Waiting Time

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 Qxd3 and if 1... Qxd3 2 h7 Kx8 3 R6+ mating

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Second division: Stockport v Barnsley (at Hyde United 7.0). League Cup: Group four: Stoke v Bury (at Newcastle Town, 7.0). Group six: Torquay v Blackpool (7.30).

COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier Division: Atterton v Farnham (7.30). First HARF LAGER CUP: Second round: Durdak v Szabolcs (7.45).

OTHER SPORT

ICE HOCKEY: Express Cup: Newcastle Cobras v Manchester Storm (7.0). Bannockburn v Nottingham Panthers (7.30). Cardiff Devils v Blackpool Aces (7.30).

SNOOKERS: Benson and Hedges Masters (at Wembley Conference Centre).

TABLE TENNIS: European League: England v Greece (in Great Yarmouth).

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 45

GEOID

(a) A geometrical solid nearly identical with a terrestrial spheroid, but having the surface at every point perpendicular to the local direction of gravity. It is thus the actual figure of the surface of the waters (ocean) on the Earth.

GEFECHTSKERWENDUNG

(b) Used by Scheer (High Seas Fleet) at Jutland, when the initial sighting of Jellicoe (Grand Fleet) showed that the latter was "crossing his T". Normal turn in line ahead is by successive ships reaching a point. But GEFECHTSKERWENDUNG meant that all the ships in the line turned 90° simultaneously. With uncertain response to fuel being, differential speeds, etc., it was fraught with danger. It came off and Scheer did it twice more.

SKEET

(c) A form of clay pigeon shooting in which the targets are projected at a variety of angles in a semicircular range. R. Jaffe, *Class Reunion*, 1979: "Yet tell me, Sire, don't you as a side (as the women) appear with your false calves, burdashes and favrites [curts on the temple]?"

BURDASH

(c) An article of personal adornment worn in the time of Queen Anne and George I. The fringed sort was worn by gentlemen. Mrs Centlivre, 1721: "Yet tell me, Sire, don't you as a side (as the women) appear with your false calves, burdashes and favrites [curts on the temple]?"

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 Qxd3 and if 1... Qxd3 2 h7 Kx8 3 R6+ mating

TELEVISION CHOICE

Tales of a pot-bellied pig

Vets in Practice

BBC1, 8.00pm

Now that the young vets have graduated and settled into jobs we can no longer look forward to those frantically anxious with tutors and anxious waits for exam results that made the original series so gripping. But if the vets' lives are less fraught in one way, their case-loads are far from predictable. In Devon, Joe is faced with two tortoises who, despite coaxing from their owner, have not bred for 15 years. In the event getting them to mate proves an easier task for Joe than choosing a bikini for his girlfriend Emma, also a vet. Emma, meanwhile, is trying to cut the tonsils of an uncooperative pot-bellied pig called Reggie. We also catch up with Mike, back from Africa and told by Dad to get a proper job. In case you are wondering what had happened to the beaming Trude from Norway, she features in tomorrow's episode — with a rottweiler.

Meet the Ancestors

BBC2, 9.00pm

A plan to build luxury houses in the Somerset village of Bleaton was stalled when archaeologists discovered an ancient burial ground on the site. It comprised six pits, in two of which were human bones. Pottery found near by suggests that the remains, one of a man, the other a woman, date from the late Bronze Age or around 1000BC. But the evidence is thrown into doubt as the programme calls in experts from universities all over the kingdom to uncover the truth about Bleaton Man and Bleaton Woman. Non-experts will marvel at how much modern science can reveal about a pile of old bones. Carbon dating solves the age riddle and, even more impressively, DNA samples reveal that today's villagers are descended from the farmers who lived in the area long before the birth of Christ.

The Truth About Women

ITV, 9.00pm

If nothing else this programme is notable for something that has hardly happened since that bad night in Paris. Somebody is less than forthcoming about Diana, Princess of Wales. The agent of this heresy is the television presenter, Mariella Frostrup, and no doubt she is already in hiding.



Joe Inglis and Emma Milne (BBC1, 8pm)

Amid familiar praise for Diana from others, Frostrup says that it is not difficult to dedicate yourself to charity when you have not got to make a living, or worry about who is looking after your children. To me, she adds, "Americans are more impressive role models than Diana will ever be." Impressive role models than Diana will ever be? What all this has to do with the ostensible subject of the film, what men think of women and vice versa, is not clear. But it makes a change from sniggering one-liners about new lads, male strippers, pregnancy simulators and sex, sex, sex.

Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends

BBC2, 9.30pm

For his final excursion into the stranger realms of American sub-culture, young Louis heads for the hills of Idaho and Montana. These are the refuge for self-styled patriots and survivalists, hard-righters convinced that an evil cabal of bankers and plotting global dominators, it soaks transpires that the energy includes the BBC, though as usual Louis manages to charm his way into the lion's den. How much of the show is set up and how much spontaneous is difficult to say but these are not the sort of people who usually welcome television crews in their midst. Not all, however, are threatening. The Rev Gary Gruid of the Aryan Nation's Church turns out to be a fan of *Are You Being Served?* Except, that is, for that effeminate Mr Humphries. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Sentimental Journey

Radio 4, 7.20pm

Arthur Smith's main role as a stand-up comic will I suspect be unexplored territory in the many interviews who have come to know his more documentary-style radio work. *Sentimental Journey* has proved a highly appropriate format for Smith and in this latest series he has produced some perceptive and witty moments with the personalities whom he takes on a journey back to their roots. Today the subject is Ingrid Pitt, who survived uncounted numbers of horror films until 25 years ago, when she fled Britain to live in Argentina. But the rise of the military junta meant that having made a couple of films she left the country. Her return to Buenos Aires with Smith is a passionate evocation of the city.

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Grearing and Zoe Ball 8.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiley Includes 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Chris Moyles 6.30am Simon Mayo The Evening Session 8.30 Live Music Update 8.40 John Peel 10.30 Mary Anne Hobbs 1.00am Charlie Jordan 4.00 Chris Moyles

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30am Bruce 11.30am Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Thompson 5.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 American Country 8.30am Paul Jones 9.00 The Doreen Williams Show 9.30am 10.00 News Extra 12.00am The Current Great Show 14.30 Richard Allcorn 12.00am Steve Macdon 3.00 Alec Leiser

RADIO 3 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme 9.00 Holly Campbell 12.00 Midday with Mel 2.00pm Rascall on Five 4.00 Newsweek with Julian Worraker 7.00 News Extra 7.30 Big Shots. Frank Warren talks to Kevin Mooney about his career in boxing 8.00 Inside Edge 9.00 Sportsmaniac 9.30 Sportshop 10.00 News Talk 11.00 News Extra 12.00am News 2.00pm Up All Night 5.00 Morning Reports

VIRGIN RADIO

5.00am Jeremy Clark 7.00 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show 10.00 News 11.00am Nick Abbot 4.00 Robin Barker 7.00 (FM) Paul Coyle (AM) Colin Jones 10.00 Mark Forster 2.00am Richard Purnell

TALK RADIO

6.30am Kelly Young with Bill Owsen 9.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00 Lynsey Kelly 3.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Peter Doolley 7.00 Anne Raeburn 9.00 James White 1.00am Ian Collins 5.00 The Early Show with Bill Owsen

WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsday 6.30 Europe Today 7.00 News 7.15 Off the Shelf: Listening with Irena 7.30 Composer of the Month 8.00 News 8.30am News in German (8.45 only) 8.50 World Business Report 9.15 Just a Taste 9.30 Network 9.45 Sports Roundup 10.00 Newsday 10.30 Discovery 11.00 Newsday 11.30am Learning World 11.45am Newsday 12.00 News 12.05pm World Business Report 12.15 Britain Today 12.30am Record News 12.45 Sports Roundup 1.00 Newsday 2.00 News 2.45 (2.30pm) 2.50 Mailbag 3.15pm Newsday 3.30 News in German (8.45 only) 3.35pm World Business Report 3.45 Sports Roundup 4.00 Newsday 4.15 Record News 4.30 The World Today: News in German (8.45 only) 4.45 Britain Today 5.00 Europe Today 5.30 World Business Report 6.00 Sports Roundup 6.30 Newsday 6.30 Assignment: News in German (8.45 only) 7.00 News Summary 7.01 Outlook 7.25 Pause for Thought 7.30 John Peel 8.00 Newsday 8.00 News 8.05 World Business Report 8.15 Britain Today 8.30am News in German 10.00 Newsday 10.30 The World Today 10.45 Sports Roundup 11.00 News 11.05 Outlook 11.30 John Peel 12.00 Newsday 12.30am Newsday 12.45 Britain Today 1.00 Newsday 1.30 Composer of the Month 2.00 Newsday 2.30 Focus on Film 3.00 Newsday 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 Assignment 4.00 Newsday 4.30 Europe Today 5.00 Newsday 5.30 Europe Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Breakfast with Bailey 8.00 Henry Kelly. Michael Barry prepares baker's snapper or risotto. Plus, the Record of the Week 12.00 Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones presents listeners' favourite music 2.00pm Concerto. Robert Schumann (Piano Concerto in A minor) 3.40 Jamie Cullum. Continuous Classic and Afternoon Romance 6.30 Newsnight 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven with John Brunning 9.00 Evening Concert. J.S. Bach (Keyboard Concerto in D minor); C.F.E. Bach (The Sorcerer's Apprentice) 10.00 News 11.00am News at Night 11.00am News at Night 2.00pm Concerto (1) 3.00 Mark Griffiths

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor. Vivaldi (Gloria in D); Godowsky (Concert Paraphrase on Die Fledermaus); Strauss (Hymn to Love); Warlock (Capriol Suite); Sibelius (Finlandia); Respighi (Fountains of Rome). 9.00 Masterworks, with Peter Hobbday. Rimsky-Korsakov (Russian Easter Festival Overture); Beethoven (Egmont in E minor, 5th); Bloch (Schelomo); Handel (Solis in D minor); Trad. arr. Britten (O Waly, Waly); The Minstrel Boy; Vaughan Williams (Symphony No 8 in D minor) 10.30 Artist of the Week: Clara Schumann 11.00 Sound Stories, with Peggy Reynolds 12.00 Composer of the Week: Leo 1.00pm Smaller Stages. Exploring the wealth of small-scale operas written by composers in the 20th century. The story is brought up to date with the work of Birtwistle, Maxwell Davies, Glass and Michael Tippett. 2.00 The BBC Orchestra. BBC National Orchestra of Wales. Includes Strauss (Don Juan), under conductor, Michael Tilson Thomas. 4.00 Ensemble. Penny Gore introduces a recital by Michael Collins, clarinet, and Kathryn Stott, piano. 6.00pm Concerto (Chamber Sonata in E flat) 7.45 Music Machine. Verly Sharp visits the St Albans Organ Museum

RADIO 4

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today 8.40 Yesterday in Parliament 8.58 Weather 9.00 News 9.05 Face the Facts with John White (1) 9.30 The Windy Side. Terence Hines continues his journey around the Capitan Sea (24) (1) 10.00 (FM) News; A Crown of Wild Myrtle. The final part of H.E. Bates's novel, dramatised by David Gilman. With Sylvia Sims 10.00 (LW) Daily Service 10.15 (LW) On These Days, with Sue Limb 10.30 From Our Own Correspondent 11.30 News; Yes and Young, with Mark Whitaker 12.00pm Giddeyrotting. The travel quiz chaired by Gideon Coe 12.05 Weather 1.00 The World at One, with Nick Clarke 1.40 The Archers (1) 55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 (LW) Test Match Special: West Indies v England. See Choice 2.00 (FM) News; Thursday Afternoon Play: Sweet Rugged Mystery, by Jesse Moya James. Two grandmothers compete for the attention of the same man. With Michelle Joseph, Heather Inman and Trevor Dineen 3.00 (FM) News; Afternoon Show, with Doreen Brennan 4.00 (FM) News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Paul Allen presents Radio 4's production of A Clockwork Orange 4.45 (FM) Short Story: In Smoke Concealed, by Mark Cowley, read by Anny Tobin 5.00 (FM) PM 5.50 Shipping Forecast 5.55 Weather

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.9-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.4. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.8. LW 198. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648, 1148, 1188 (12.45-2.55pm). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1000, 1010, 1020, 1030, 1040, 1050, 1060, 1070, 1080, 1090, 1100, 1110, 1120, 1130, 1140, 1150, 1160, 1170, 1180, 1190, 1200, 1210, 1220, 1230, 1240, 1250, 1260, 1270, 1280, 1290, 1300, 1310, 1320, 1330, 1340, 1350, 1360, 1370, 1380, 1390, 1400, 1410, 1420, 1430, 1440, 1450, 1460, 1470, 1480, 1490, 1500, 1510, 1520, 1530, 1540, 1550, 1560, 1570, 1580, 1590, 1600, 1610, 1620, 1630, 1640, 1650, 1660, 1670, 1680, 1690, 1700, 1710, 1720, 1730, 1740, 1750, 1760, 1770, 1780, 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000.

صحة من الامل

Unbelievable, unthinkable and unspoilt

Hillary Clinton's jaw dropped when Bill leant across her that fateful morning. Having just read Monica Lewinsky's allegations about him in the press, and said, "You're not going to believe this," then she definitely won't believe what happened last night in *The X* Files (BBC).

No, I'm not talking about the fact that in the tiny town of Martinsburg, West Virginia, five babies are born with tails in the space of three months — because although this might seem improbable to you, all FBI agents are specifically trained to find a simple explanation for even the most mysterious event: Chappaquiddick, for example, and as Scully points out to her, FBI partner Mulder, tails on newborns are nothing new: "Fetuses have them. Their coxys enlarge to contain the spinal fluid, and then it shrinks as the child develops. Occasionally it doesn't. It's extremely rare, but it

has been known to happen" (Do you ever get the feeling that Scully wouldn't make the cuttiest model for Scully Junior: "Mom, I fell off my bike and cut my knee," Scully Senior: "It's just a superficial abrasion of the outer epidermal layer with no evidence of infection of the subcutaneous tissue. Perfectly standard wound-pattern for this type of accident. Now, best it"). No, what strained your credulity was the fact that the father of these freak babies — who was himself born with a tail — possessed the ability to change form and used it to mirror himself into the "heavenly" double and, thereby, trick his way into the five women's beds.


Can you believe this? That a man who can change his appearance to look like the absolute double of anybody at all, pretends to be the husband of five women from Martinsburg and impregnates them so that they give birth to babies with tails?

It's just too preposterous to believe! Wouldn't anyone with that kind of gift, and keen for sexual conquests, have transformed himself into, say, Brad Pitt?

Eating placenta probably wouldn't be Scully either. It's nothing unusual, Mulder. Women are not eating their afterbirth for ages, and they are a recognised and prized source of many hormones and amino acids, including oestrogen, progesterone, deoxytocin, serotonin, glycine, and arginine. The B6 may help to ward off post-natal depression.

Now, I have nothing against people eating their own placenta. But why put your 20 dinner guests under gastronomic pressure by turning it into pâté fry with shallots, brandy, garlic, and freshly squeezed lime juice) and then serving it to them on home-made focaccia bread? Lee, the father of Indie Mo, the boy

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

whose placenta was turned into a snack on last night's *TV Dinner* (Channel 4), told us why: "Neither of us are Christians, so we didn't want to get Indie christened. But we wanted to say 'Welcome to the world', and it's just a less formal way of doing it." Just one thing, Lee, your idea of "less formal" makes even Liberate look starchy than Black Rod.

As the father of a new baby, one

might not be able to escape catching sight of the placenta that follows one's own child into the world. But that doesn't mean you want to catch sight of anyone else's, especially if you're the greasy type. Watching a placenta being sliced up and pan-fried in the middle of a cookery programme was a jolt. It was like gazing at *The Generation Game* and suddenly finding the screen being taken over by a detailed pathological examination. Now, I'm not saying that inviting others to partake of the family's gene pool (as Indie Mo's granny put it) didn't make for a touching, private celebration. Just that, for one, would not have protested too loudly if it had stayed private.

And guess what? After all that, it tasted like... yes, like chicken!

Some people would say that eating human body parts was risky in any circumstance. They might even point out that kurru, the

original human form of BSE, was rife among the Fore people of Papua New Guinea where, as a mark of respect, everyone would eat male elders when they died. But when you are living on a small island such as Tristan Da Cunha, 2,000 miles from the nearest land mass, whose 300 inhabitants are all somehow related to each other, then eating canapés spread with grow-your-own placenta pâté could well result in the sort of genetic novelty that gets even Special Agent Scully excited.

For *Under the Sun* (BBC2), we were in Britain's smallest colony, plopped like a pebble in the raging seas of the South Atlantic. *Tristan Da Cunha* has one shop: a pub that charges for a couple of hours every evening to sell beer at 1970s prices; a resident Administrator whose word is law; a precarious dependence on fishing; Union Jacks; the BBC World

Service: a dentist who visits on board the island's annual supply boat; and portraits of the Queen. Nothing happens: slowly. It's like Beckett, without so many jokes; or, to be fair, so much violence.

There's never been a murder. Conrad Glass, the island's bobby, can only recall one serious accident in his entire career. He pines for "some action." His handcuffs gather dust: "I don't know when I'll ever get the use of them."

This speck of land is a sort of territorial DNA. Every aspect of cell life in the motherland is reproduced, though in miniature. But even Britain now thinks twice about drinking from its own colonial gene pool: Tristanians are no longer accepted as British citizens and few can visit what they regard as their homeland. Luckily, most of the islanders seem to retain a keen appetite for their precarious, isolated existence: at least it doesn't taste like chicken.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (43281)
 - 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (77495)
 - 9.00 All About the Shop (8750495)
 - 9.25 Change That (8782230)
 - 9.50 Kilroy (7) (278307)
 - 10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (7) (2789501)
 - 10.55 The Really Useful Show (7) (9515143)
 - 11.35 What Would You Do? A woman whose sister calls her a bad mother gets advice (3374853)
 - 12.00 News (7) and weather (8596563)
 - 12.05pm Call My Bluff (1682822)
 - 12.35 Going for a Song (1158727)
 - 1.00 One O'Clock News (7) and weather (70582)
 - 1.30 Regional News (7) (7117495)
 - 1.40 The Weather Show (8623855)
 - 1.45 Neighbours (7) (2198414)
 - 2.10 Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters: The first quarter-final at Wembley (5756380)
 - 3.30 Playdays (4821563) 3.50 The Littlest Pet Shop (5824850) 4.20 McGe and Me (8238389) 4.30 Julia Jayly and Harriet Hyde (1554414) 4.35 The Mask (6144308)
 - 5.00 Newsround (7) (7686292)
 - 5.10 Orange Hill (7) (4982563)
 - 5.35 Neighbours (7) (695834)
 - 6.00 Six O'Clock News (7) and weather (414)
 - 6.30 Regional News (7) and weather (765)
 - 7.00 Watchdog: with Anna Robinson Consumer Investigations (7) (5312)
 - 7.30 EastEnders (7) (850)
 - 8.00 Vets in Practice New series of documentaries following the vets' school graduates. After a year in practice, Alison performs a life-saving operation on a kitten and Joe attempts to play matchmaker to a pair of tortoises. Emma tends to her most troublesome regular patient (7) (8292)
 - 8.30 The Doctors: Lois and Briggs find themselves suffering from acute hypochondria as they patrol the wards of a hospital to guard a bank robber injured in a heist (7) (5327)
 - 9.00 Nine O'Clock News (7) and weather (2211)
 - 9.30 Roger Roger Andre offers Basil a few words of wisdom on understanding the fairer sex (7) (921921)
 - 10.20 Best Show in the World - Probably Tony Hawks chairs a comedy quiz about the world of advertising, with Alan Davies and Fred MacKay (7) (839594)
 - 10.50 Cricket Highlights from Trinidad (123230)
 - 11.20 Question Time Guests include the Conservative Party chairman Lord Parkinson and Liberal Democrat MP Jenny Tonge (7) (309230)
 - 12.20am Prisoner of War (1990) Starring Ralph Macchio, Martin Sheen and Noah Stale. A 19-year-old army recruit is captured by the Viet Cong ten days before his tour of duty to end.
 - 1.55 Weather (4354475)
 - 2.00 BBC News 24

- BBC2**
- 6.10am Why Me? Why Now? (1972263) 6.35 Brief Encounter (7) (3105327) 7.00 See Hear News (7) (8455380) 7.15 Teletubbies (7) (5653747) 7.40 Hippi Hippi the Hair Bear Bunch (7) (750118)
 - 8.25 King of the Hill (1003018) 8.25 King of the Hill (2714478) 8.35 Johnson and Friends (5000989) 8.45 The Record (8017698) 9.10 Halo aus Berlin (5611940) 9.25 Megamaths (7983830) 9.45 Come Outside (1143196) 10.00 Teletubbies (30478) 10.20 Sleazytime (3214308) 10.45 The Experiment (9798386) 11.05 Space Ark (9571105) 11.15 Zip Zag (7) (5748785) 11.35 English File (3381143) 11.55 Liteschool
 - 12.30pm Working Lunch (11766)
 - 1.00 Joshua Jones (11920563) 1.10 The Craft Hour: stained glass (8648593) 2.10 Going, Going, Gone (5901211) 2.40 News (7): Regional News and Weather News (7): Regional News and Weather News (8825853) 2.45 Westminster with Anne Meekler (9324853) 3.25 News (7): Regional News and Weather (5844211)
 - 3.30 Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters: The first quarter-final (670747)
 - 6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine A trip to Bajor turns into something of a nightmare for Kiko (7) (988259)
 - 6.45 Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters: Quarter-final action from the Wembley Conference Centre (241388)
 - 7.30 Films: Slight Rum Raiders How it has changed the financial sector. (292) WALE: Ray Meers' World of Survival (292)
 - 8.00 Ray Meers' World of Survival The Kaihahi where the hunter-gatherer community of Johans bushmen survive in sweltering temperatures (7) (4834) WALE: Fine Families (4834)
 - 8.30 Jeremy Clarkson's Extreme Machines Jet boats, Ferraris, B2 bombers and a French model (7) (3698)
 - 9.00 Meet the Ancestors: Bones in the Graveyard The remains of two crouched bodies discovered in a Somerset village (7) (8263)
 - 9.30 Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends: Militia groups in Idaho. Last in series (929563)
 - 10.20 Dance to the Camera (143018)
 - 10.30 Newsnight (7) (125105) 11.15 Snooker: Benson and Hedges Masters (882530) 11.55 Skiing Forecast (480605) 12.00 The Midnight Hour (93273)
 - 12.30am Learning Zone: O U: A University Without Walls (48239) 1.00 Eurovision Song Contest: Counting the Cost (84188) 1.30 In Search of Identity (95056) 2.00 Further Education: Newcastle (54815) 4.00 Film and Media: Film Education — Anastasia (76728) 4.30 Film Education: Fairytale (85051) 5.00 Teacher Training (42612) 5.30 Teaching Today Special 4 (390896) 5.45 O U: Selling (3899419)

- HTV**
- 6.00am GMTV (5972959)
 - 9.25 Win, Lose or Draw (7) (8748650)
 - 9.55 Regional News (7) (9115501)
 - 10.00 The Time, The Place (7) (50230)
 - 10.30 This Morning (7) (58364018)
 - 12.20pm Regional News (7) (8595747)
 - 12.30 ITN Lunchtime News (7) (8118989)
 - 12.55 Shortland Street (6186360)
 - 1.25 Home and Away Lachie's mother arrives in Summer Bay (7) (70192308)
 - 1.50 Crossroads (1879747)
 - 2.20 Chef School (8242292)
 - 2.50 Vanessa (7) (8463211)
 - 3.20 News (7) (5849768)
 - 3.25 Regional News (7) (5848037)
 - 3.30 Potamus Park (1882320) 3.40 Wizardora (8620834) 3.50 The Forgotten Toys (1861018) 4.05 Blazing Dragons (7) (7304337) 4.15 Mike and Angelo (7) (8252523) 4.40 Cartoon Time (5452309) 4.45 Shop Practice (7) (6128360)
 - 5.10 A Country Practice (5464143)
 - 5.40 ITN Early Evening News (7) and weather (47698)
 - 6.00 Home and Away (7) (7) (897105)
 - 6.25 Regional Weather (538501)
 - 6.30 Regional News (834)
 - 7.00 Emmerdale Heather goes to see her father for the first time in years (7) (5940)
 - 7.30 Babewatch Behind-the-scenes look at the world of modelling (7) (178)
 - 8.00 The Bill: Friends in High Places Sani and Quinlan have a car stolen from right under their noses (7) (198)



Mark Gatfield at the ready (8.30pm)

- As HTV West except:**
- 12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (6186360)
 - 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5464143)
 - 6.25 Central News (905124)
 - 6.55-7.00 Lifestile (94121)
 - 12.25am The Jerry Springer Show (9337815)
 - 1.15 Not Fade Away (415631)
 - 2.15 Box Office America (7832419)
 - 2.40 War of the Worlds (7853148)
 - 3.35 The Time, the Place (7858815)
 - 4.00 The Body: A User's Guide (82254)
 - 4.30 Central Jobfinder '98 (9151599)
 - 5.20 Asian Eye (1099490)
- WEST-COUNTRY**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.20pm-12.30 Illuminations (8595747)
 - 12.55 Home and Away (6186360)
 - 1.25-1.50 Emmerdale (70192308)
 - 5.10-5.40 Home and Away (5464143)
 - 6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (16211)
 - 12.25am The Making of Titanic (4167544)
- MERIDIAN**
- As HTV West except:
 - 5.10pm-5.40 Home and Away (5464143)
 - 6.00 Meridian Tonight (582)
 - 6.30-7.00 Getaways (834)
 - 12.25am The Making of Titanic (4167544)
 - 5.00 Freescreen (46438)
- ANGLIA**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55-1.25 Yen Can Cook (6186360)
 - 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5464143)
 - 6.25 Anglia Weather (539230)
 - 6.25 Anglia News (905124)
 - 6.55-7.00 What's On (94121)
 - 10.29 Anglia Air Watch (431785)
- S4C**
- Starts: 7.00am The Big Breakfast (60105)
 - 9.00 Yegollon (762292)
 - 11.30 Powerhouses (8414)
 - 12.00 Rialto Lake (23488)
 - 12.30pm Sesame Street (37114)
 - 1.00 Slot Meltrinn (1089673)
 - 1.38 Film: Keeper of the Flame (1942, b/w). A drama starring Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn, directed by George Cukor (5019921)
 - 3.30 Collectors' Lot (940) 4.00 Fifteen-to-One (747) 4.30 Countdown (259) 5.00 S Pump (5178) 5.30 Bloom (211) 6.00 Newyddion (375969) 6.10 Heno (933563) 7.00 Pabyl y Cwm (848785) 7.25 Pwy 'di Pwy? (860460) 8.00 Cysr Haul (2230) 8.30 Newyddion (8037) 9.00 I dot (1834) 10.00 Film: Enemy Mine (9501) 12.00 Film: Space Master X-7 (9019490) 1.15am-2.05 Dispatches (8988896)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (6186360)
 - 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5464143)
 - 6.25 Central News (905124)
 - 6.55-7.00 Lifestile (94121)
 - 12.25am The Jerry Springer Show (9337815)
 - 1.15 Not Fade Away (415631)
 - 2.15 Box Office America (7832419)
 - 2.40 War of the Worlds (7853148)
 - 3.35 The Time, the Place (7858815)
 - 4.00 The Body: A User's Guide (82254)
 - 4.30 Central Jobfinder '98 (9151599)
 - 5.20 Asian Eye (1099490)
- CHANNEL 4**
- 5.55am Sesame Street (90921) 7.00 The Big Breakfast (60105)
 - 9.00 Schools: History in Action (8188673) 9.20 Geographical Eye Over Britain (7) (4788817) 9.40 Understanding Northern Ireland (7) (894259) 10.00 Middle English (7) (4313105) 10.15 Worlds of Faith (436056) 10.30 Scientific Eye (7) (973834) 10.50 The English Programme (9713698) 11.10 The German Programme (5732582)
 - 11.30 Powerhouse Political magazine (6414) 12.00 Sesame Street (23488) 12.30pm Light Lunch: Ken Horn prepares a meal for the cast of Casualty (30056)
 - 1.30 A Woman's Face (1941, b/w) Joan Crawford as a woman with a ruthless character, radically changed after the removal of a disfigurement. Directed by George Cukor (20211)
 - 3.30 Collectors' Lot (7) (940) 4.00 Fifteen-to-One (7) (747) 4.30 Countdown (7) (618747)
 - 4.55 Rialto Lake Sexy clothes to attract attention (7) (423216) 5.30 Pat Rescue (7) (211)
 - 6.00 Rosanne Rosanne is involved in a car accident (7) (124)
 - 6.30 Hollyoaks Will Lucy be able to cope with her reduced prescription (7) (476)
 - 7.00 Channel 4 News (7) and weather (402563)
 - 7.55 Lie of the Land Mark Thomas concludes his quest to get the public access to historic houses (989765)
 - 8.00 Mrs Cohen's Money Tackling Social Security Minister John Denham about doing more for pensioners who are missing out on state benefits (4/8) (7) (223)
 - 8.30 Bloom A look at the rosa family (3/6) (8037)
 - 9.00 Dispatches How airline passengers are exposed to the risk of catching deadly diseases in-flight (7) (91389)
 - 9.45 Fourmations Two animations — Touch Wood and Combination Skin (820360)

- CHANNEL 5**
- CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE**
- Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are: picture, 10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz.
- 6.00am 5 News Early (7402327)
 - 7.00 Exclusive (7) (4152211) 7.30 Milkshake! (7841230) 8.35 Winnie's House (7) (871414) 8.00 Havaokoz (7) (7360560) 8.30 WideWorld (7) (7369921)
 - 9.00 Espresso (8287698) 10.00 Fight to Freedom (7) (7) (2296478) 10.30 Sunlight Beach (7) (3615018) 11.10 Leeza (7276495)
 - 12.00 5 News (7) (7370037) 12.30pm Family Affairs (7) (7) (7328476) 1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (7) (4152882) 1.30 HouseBusters (7) (732747)
 - 2.00 Beauty and the Beast is Vincent a murderer? (2287105)
 - 3.00 100 Per Cent Gold (1522853)
 - 3.30 Journey to Shiloh (1968) with James Caan, Michael Sarrazin and Harrison Ford. Drama about a group of gun-ho Texans who dream of lighting for the Confederates in the American Civil War. Directed by William Hale (6985853)
- 5.30 Exclusive Special (4766688)**
- 6.00 100 Per Cent (4756211)**
- 6.30 Family Affairs** Claire jumps to the wrong conclusion while investigating Roy's behaviour; Duncan leads rather useless (7) (4747653)
- 7.00 5 News (7) (1514834)**
- 7.30 Flight to Freedom** Wildlife documentary about an unusual conservation scheme whereby rare whooping crane chicks are fostered by sandhill cranes (7) (4743747)
- 8.00 Was It Good for You?** Alisa Greenhalgh and Geoff Day travel to Crete (1523882)
- 8.30 Tracey Talks On... Crime** A selection of Tracey Ullman's comic characters offer up their experiences of crime (7) (1519399)
- 9.00 Lost in America (1985)** Comedy written, directed by and starring Albert Brooks. A couple of yuppies in 1980s New York decide to give up everything and travel across America — first stop Las Vegas. With Julie Hagerty, Hans Wagner and Maggie Roswell (9678124)
- 10.50 The Jack Docherty Show** Chat and comedy (92714)
- 11.35 Live and Dangerous** Sports magazine presented by Dominik Diamond and Shelley Webb. Includes, at 1.35, Brazilian football action from the Paulista league (15859940)
- 4.40am Prisoner: Call Block B (7160544)**
- 5.30 100 Per Cent (7) (8235235)**

PRESENTER Sara Cox (5.30pm)



10.00 Jake's Progress The final episode of Alan Bleasdale's comedy drama about a family in crisis. With Robert Lindsay and Julie Walters (7) (72482414)

12.05am 4.00 Shooting Gallery: showcase for short films. 12.05 The Future Lasts a Long Time (1649419) 12.20 Parts, Brbbon (1553612) 12.35 China (9269709) 2.00 Dirt Shadows (9249893) 2.05 Eye Die (4771902) 1.15 The Ring (7684338) 1.30 Hotel (8259885) 1.35 Moi, Le Dormeur (7245893) 1.50 La Mère Sauvage (1782047) 2.25 The Uncollected (9103525) 2.55 Entre Vies (9996983) 3.20 The Coriolis Effect (955612)

4.00 Down to Earth (1947) A musical fantasy starring Rita Hayworth and Gary Parks. Directed by Alexander Hall (816780)

- For further listings see Saturday's Vision**
- SKY 1**
- 7.00am Street Show (89143) 7.30 Bump in the Night (272327) 7.45 The Simpsons (25211) 8.15 Oprah Winfrey (827769) 8.40 Home (8121) 8.50 Another World (8114) 9.10 Days of Our Lives (29269) 12.00 Mened with Children (10523) 12.30pm M*A*S*H (46478) 1.00 General (74252) 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (80465) 4.30pm Jerry Jones (7712) 4.00 Oprah Winfrey (827769) 5.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation (827769) 5.30 The Live 8 Show (9230) 6.30 The Simpsons (4478) 7.30 Real TV (1872) 8.00 Saturday Night Live (827769) 8.30 The Simpsons (4478) 9.00 The Simpsons (4478) 9.30 The Simpsons (4478) 10.00 The Simpsons (4478) 10.30 The Simpsons (4478) 11.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation (827769) 12.00 The Simpsons (4478) 12.30 The Simpsons (4478) 1.00 The Simpsons (4478) 1.30 The Simpsons (4478) 2.00 The Simpsons (4478) 2.30 The Simpsons (4478) 3.00 The Simpsons (4478) 3.30 The Simpsons (4478) 4.00 The Simpsons (4478) 4.30 The Simpsons (4478) 5.00 The Simpsons (4478) 5.30 The Simpsons (4478) 6.00 The Simpsons 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SNOOKER 43
Women take their cue from Corr

SPORT

GOLF 46

Martin goes to court for ticket to ride



THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5 1998

Atherton to make first use of seamer's paradise if he wins toss

England attack awaits green light

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN PORT OF SPAIN

PORT OF SPAIN has become the West Indies' stronghold, the ground where they have not lost in 21 years, and England's prospects of breaking this impressive sequence may rest uncomfortably on the toss of a coin. The heavily scrutinised pitch for what must be called the second Test match, but is to all intents the first, remained verdant yesterday, a sight for seam bowlers to drool over. Bowling first this morning could prove a significant advantage.

The last visiting team to win a Test at Queen's Park Oval were Pakistan, in 1977, a time when conditions here traditionally favoured spin. If Phil Tufnell, the one specialist slow bowler on view, has any significant influence on the match, it will probably be because the quicker bowlers have not done their job.

Tufnell is far more likely to be effective in the second of the back-to-back games here, due to start tomorrow week on a pitch more thoroughly prepared and, through being plumb next door to the first pitch, subject to the scarring of bowlers' follow-throughs. This initial game, like most played in modern Trinidad, will surely be the province of seam.

There is no indication of any of the devastating unevenness that caused the abandonment in Kingston a week ago. Though it was covered for much of yesterday it will start dry and, in pace, it is likely to be unexceptional. But as the pitch's colour is still barely distinguishable from the rest of the square, lateral movement is almost inevitable.

This has been the recent trend at Queen's Park, where the draw against India last year was a striking exception among a series of low-scoring games. The 1995 match against Australia was completed in 150 overs and the last 14 Tests here, stretching back to the start of the 1980s, have produced an average total of only 250, much the lowest in the Caribbean.

Brian Lara, who is effectively starting his captaincy on his home ground, publicly



Atherton offers advice to Russell, right, and Headley as England make their final preparations at Queen's Park Oval yesterday. Photograph: Clive Mason / Allsport

requested a covering of grass and, in Trinidad, his wishes are seldom denied. His mansion home, perched high on a hill, looks down upon Queen's Park and this morning he will descend to the ground with another strong wish, for the coin to fall in his favour.

Michael Atherton, the England captain, chose to bat first in Kingston on the sound premise that conditions would not improve. He can have no such conviction here and said yesterday: "If the pitch re-

mained as it is now, you would have to think very seriously about bowling first."

Eight years ago, on a pitch visibly similar to today's, though initially damp, England did precisely that and, before lunch, had reduced West Indies to 29 for five. Somehow, through a conspiracy of circumstances, they failed to win and four years on they suffered one of the most sensational defeats in Test history when they were bowled out for 46.

Atherton has defiantly positive memories of that game. "We dominated the match for a long period," he said. "It was a pretty green England side and if we'd had a bit more experience, we would have

DETAILS

WEST INDIES (from): S L Campbell, S C Vicars, B C Lara (capt), S Chandernagore, C L Hooper, J C Adams, D Williams, C E L Anderson, G A Whitt, K G Brindaman, F A Rose, N A H McLean, I R Bishop
ENGLAND (probable): M A Atherton (capt), R J Stewart, J P Crawley, W Hirst, G P Thorpe, A J Hone, R C Russell, A R Coadock, D W Howley, A R C Fraser, P C R Tufnell
Umpires: S Bucknor and S Venkatraghavan (Ind)

Television: Live: Sky Sports, 3.15pm-4.0pm
Radio: Live: Radio 4 (long wave) from 2.5pm

players will be on duty today, and coincidentally the same number of West Indians. The recall of Kenny Benjamin means that the West Indies side has a still more familiar look and his probing, skiddy bowling is likely to be effective, though arguably no more so than that of Dean Headley. One potential problem for England is the need to peak afresh for the start they expected to make last week. Atherton, sporting a harsh new haircut, said: "It was a difficult few days in Kingston and we have been here a long time now without playing much meaningful cricket."

For all that, there is a positive mood around the team, a refreshing sense of a

unit confident in its component parts. The nature of the itinerary has dictated a pre-announced Test XI and nothing has yet occurred to shake the conviction that the four selectors have chosen well.

Submerged amid the chaos at Sabina Park, the late loss of Jack Russell to sickness did produce one illogicality. His replacement, Mark Butcher, batted at No 3, where it would surely have been better to show confidence in the newly-installed John Crawley.

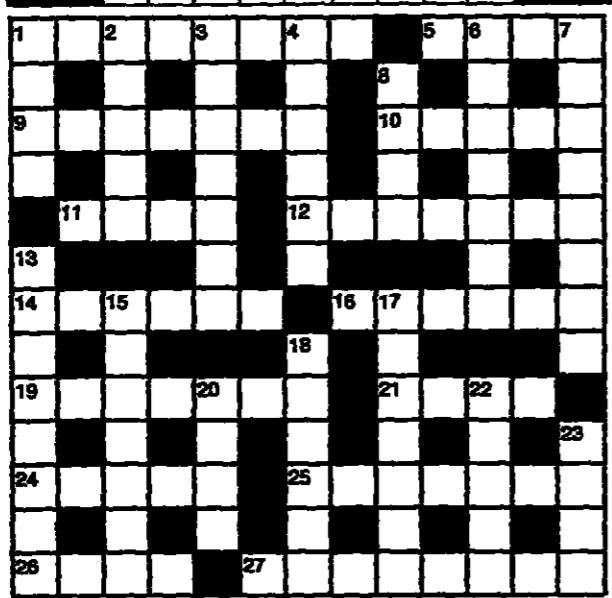
Butcher makes way for Russell again today and Crawley is back in his nominated position, looking to make it less of a hot potato than it has become. "People seem to think there is a curse on batting at

three for England," Crawley said, "but it only takes a decent score or two for everyone to forget it."

There is an unfinished and unprepared feel to Queen's Park, where an electronic scoreboard and a new grandstand are still being worked upon. It is also carnival time in Trinidad, when the focus of the locals is more on all-night partying than a day at the cricket. But that cannot detract from its importance, nor from the need for England to substantiate the hope that they have grown up as a team.

The International Cricket Council ruled yesterday that the abandoned first Test match in Jamaica will stand in the records.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1321

- ACROSS**
- 1 Ravenousness (8)
 - 5 Unescorted man: share profiteer (4)
 - 9 Close-packed group of items (7)
 - 10 Beatific, walking here (2,3)
 - 11 Cut: dispense with (4)
 - 12 Anxious, restless (7)
 - 14 Deny responsibility for (6)
 - 16 Summary of text (6)
 - 19 UN/ USSR hostility (4,3)
 - 21 Fellow: crack (skin) (4)
 - 24 Express gratitude (5)
 - 25 Turandot composer (7)
 - 26 Tow along: a bore (4)
 - 27 Nil: wake-up call (8)
- DOWN**
- 1 Deputy: a gripper (4)
 - 2 Approximate: harsh (5)
 - 3 Another's tool (4-3)
 - 4 A plant: care in spending (6)
 - 6 Activity on road: trade (7)
 - 7 Slow-witted (8)
 - 8 Slavery symbol: bucket-carrier's frame (4)
 - 13 Given schooling (8)
 - 15 Fruit ruler's wife (7)
 - 17 Put (material) for reclamation (7)
 - 18 Threefold: pre-WWI Alliance, Entente (6)
 - 20 Arroused (4)
 - 22 Tempest: airy spirit (5)
 - 23 Cut up: gambler's cubes (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1320
ACROSS: 1 Ultimatum 6 Dot 8 Realize 9 Swell 10 Gill 11 Priority 15 Tendon 14 Fester 17 Fuselage 18 Leap 20 Room 21 Nairobi 22 Mot 23 Royal blue
DOWN: 1 Upright 2 Trail one's coat 3 Maim 4 Theory 5 Misnomer 6 Dyed-in-the-wool 7 Tally 12 Pollster 15 Reptile 16 Agency 17 Forum 19 Pill

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